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CORA FORBES MARSH

THE

PRINCIPLES

OF

PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS

EDUCATION.

BY

W. NEWNHAM, Esq.

AUTHOR OF A TRIBUTE OF SYMPATHY, &c. &c.

"Take this child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."—Exodus ii. 9.

"Il n'y a rien de petit dans l'education des enfans"—Gardien.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCXXVII.

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LONDON:
IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

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PART III.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

(CONTINUED.)

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

CHAP. IX.

ON ATTENTION TO THE NATURAL TEMPER AND DISPOSITION OF CHILDREN.

TEMPER is the expression of the agency upon the mental manifestations, of that physical temperament, which has been already considered in a former part of this work; *disposition,* on the contrary, is the *sum,* and general result of those mental attributes, which are constituted by the intellectual faculties and the passions. As such, both are subjected to the influence of education, the government of principle, the subjection or excitation of passion, the regulation of religion, the controul of habit, the morbid agency of vice, and the cultivation of virtue; hence do they become the peculiar objects of moral instruction.

The first object of education, therefore, will be to encourage what is useful, to repress what is injurious; and the utmost vigilance, attention, and perseverance will be required to remove from the child, whatever may be prejudicial to its

peace, or detract from its worth; and this principle will be especially applied to the faults which are so prominent in children, the correction, and amelioration of which, will constitute the greater part of the duty of forming the temper and disposition.

Man is conceived in sin; he inherits a sinful nature; he brings into the world a heart tainted by corruption, subjected to the malign influence of the great enemy of mankind, alienated from God, and averse from holiness; out of it proceed evil thoughts and actions; the will and the affections, the sentiments and the conduct are influenced by this fountain of evil: the natural bent of his intellectual faculties, is continually towards a perversion of their high and original design; sin is his congenial element, perhaps even his delight, and therefore his prevailing tendencies will be towards that which is wrong, offensive to God, and injurious to man. While then the parent is anxious for the removal of the cause, an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, and for the renewal and conversion of that heart by the Spirit of grace; it will yet be her duty to watch over the operation of this evil principle in detail, and to combat its influence wherever it may be exhibited.

No sooner do children begin to act at all, but we discover how universally sin has pervaded all the sources of intelligence: the first glimmerings of reason are obscured by that lurid hue, which is portentous of the coming storm; the attention

is fixed with difficulty upon that which is good, and it is easily attracted by all that is trashy and useless; the perception of evil is infinitely quicker than that of virtue; the sentiments of religion quickly pass from the memory, while the recollection is loaded with the expressions of vice, and even tormented with their involuntary suggestion in after life, at a period too when the powers of the soul have been marshalled against their influence. There is a greater pleasure in reflecting on the images of crime, than on the character of piety: the conscience is enfeebled and oppressed; its voice stifled, and its actions perverted: the imagination delights to revel over scenes of iniquity, and is difficultly carried forward to anticipations of future happiness, and glory, and praise: the will is enslaved by selfishness; the imitation of all that is wrong is most easy—of all that is right most onerous; the judgment is prone to perpetual error; the evil passions grow and flourish, while the good are educated with difficulty; anger and hatred, and puny revenge often characterize the phenomena of every day; and the exercise of the affections is perverted continually.

It is indeed true that for many of these early actions and expressions, children are not accountable; for we shall not believe that a just and holy God will be strict to mark iniquity in his creatures, before they have had their senses exercised to discern good from evil; but the existence of the sinful propensity is not on this ac-

count the less easily demonstrable, nor is the duty of parents less obvious. Shall *they* neglect the disposition of their children, because a merciful God will not require a strict judgment of their earliest exercise? Will *they* think lightly of those sins for which Christ died, because their children may be exempted from the punishment annexed to every breach of the divine law, through the merits of his atoning sacrifice? Shall *they* suffer the uninterrupted growth, the wild luxuriance of unchecked evil disposition, to accumulate upon their offspring till the period of its accountability has arrived, and then send it into the world to buffet with temptation in a thousand forms, with a few barren principles to guide its darkling way through life, and yet expect, or even hope that thus ignorant of the nature of evil; thus destitute of self-government; thus loaded with the prurient growth of evil disposition; thus misguided by unsubdued passion; thus hurried away by uncontrouled, and undefined desire, it shall not make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience? Shall that be termed *affection* which allows of a proposition in morals, which would be illogical and inconsequential in reasoning, and absurd in mathematics? Shall we then defer the commencement of this regulation of the temper and disposition till this unknown period of accountability has arrived? Shall we defer the preparation for death until the period of dissolution, simply because we know not when it may occur? Rather, should we not be wise *to-day;* and not

knowing, nor seeking to define, *when* the actions of a child become accountable, should we not act as if that period were early, were immediate; and should not the intervening hours, or days, or months, or years be all devoted to that preparation which will give it a knowledge of its duty, and power to perform it, as far as that power is within the reach of education.

It may indeed be said, that by the communication of this knowledge, and by preparing the child for its trials and difficulties, you hasten the period when it will know good from evil; when it will have power to choose the one, and eschew the other, and when it will consequently have to give an account of its actions; and that it is thus placed in a worse situation than if it had remained in ignorance! Miserable sophism indeed! proceeding upon an entire forgetfulness of the principle just now laid down, that *if* this period *ever may* arrive, it must be cruelty to suffer that future to become present, before the work of preparation for its difficulties should commence; and as if the situation of man were rendered worse by the revelation of the will of God, and by a knowledge of the way in which he may find pardon and acceptance with Him. It is readily granted that the guilt of those who remain obstinately and finally impenitent, as well as of those, who in despite of religious knowledge and education, go on and increase in sin, is immeasurably enhanced; but shall the remedy be withheld from *all*, because there are some who will

not embrace it? Shall the traveller through life be deprived of the compass of observation, of the remarks and cautions of former travellers, and of all the maps and charts which may assist his progress through an unknown country, because there are those who reject these advantages; and that precisely because their errors are the less pardonable, if they do err with such guides and such extensive information, and such preparation to overcome difficulties, resist danger, and conquer every enemy? Such reasoning were absurd: be it therefore the design, the uniform object of parents, to become acquainted with that combination of physical and moral agency, which forms original predisposition in *the child*, and which, according to its permitted or counteracted influence, will constitute character *in the adult*. We have seen that this predisposition is towards that which is evil; yet all are by no means equally disposed to the same expression of depravity; although the spring may be *corrupt*, yet the *actions* of the heart may be widely different in individuals; in one case more amiable and benevolent, in another stained with a darker shade of malignity. Such is the result of peculiarities of natural temper and disposition, of the physical and moral constitution, of relative situation favourable or unfavourable to their development; of the peculiar temptations to which different ages of life are exposed; of the heedlessness and inconsideration of youth, and of many other external causes: hence the necessity of attending to the original

or acquired bias, as manifested in the earliest notices of intellect and feeling; and of so moulding and managing this tendency, as that it shall *advance*, and not retard the child's happiness and usefulness.

The parent's earliest object will be to discover what influence is exerted by the natural disposition on the first actions, aye more, on the first attempts towards action of her offspring; and according to the judicious or injudicious employment of the knowledge thus acquired, will be the value of the future character. Here there can be no such thing as the application of systematic laws, and for the best possible reason, even because they can have no existence. There is no summary gauge of the human mind which can shew its powers and properties: all that can be said is, that there is an indefinite variety in the dispositions of children, and that the individuality of each can only be ascertained by examining the germ of reason; by tracing its ramifications in thought, and its expansion in intellect; by watching over the earliest glow of affection, and the feeblest scintillation of passion. These manifestations and attributes of mental constitution, though much *altered*, and *governed*, *fostered*, and *repressed* by education, are not its *offspring:* the predisposition exists, and is called into action by instruction; the great object is therefore to ascertain early the nature of this predisposition, and to awaken or repress it accordingly; or to diminish

he intensity of its influence, by some counter-vailing principle.

There are two great classes which may be separately defined, as possessing *good* or *bad* dispositions: among the former, we may reckon the mild, amiable, kind, generous, docile, affectionate, compassionate, easily susceptible of the finer and more delicate emotions, readily wrought upon by an appeal to their feelings, and without difficulty, biassed towards that which is right: among the latter, may be distinguished as more frequently observable, the obstinate, unamiable, self-willed, ungovernable, proud, haughty, revengeful, and malicious. Any *one* of these characters may predominate as a quality of the mental manifestations, and give its prevailing hue to all the rest. From this principal tinge, as exhibited in action, the parent judges of the influence of the master passion of the heart, and of its effect upon the character, when wrought up and associated, when blended and amalgamated with every thought and feeling; and from this judgment forms her indications for the particular plan of treatment. This predominating character has a tendency to prejudice the mind, to cause it to see through its own medium, and to represent things which *are not* as though they *were;* and things which *are,* under distorted or imaginative forms; thus directly leading to error of opinion, and obliquity of conduct.

In forming this estimate of the prevailing and

influential motive and spring of action, care must be taken by the parent, lest her attention be rivetted by some prominent but superficial attribute, to the neglect of the deeper workings of the soul; those hidden influences, which are only the more powerful from their profundity; which escape the notice of every common observer; but which by and bye astonish by their explosion, and then give some colour to the idea that the character has been changed, whereas it has only been *misunderstood.* It is not a *limited* observation which will suffice for this purpose, or the parent will be varying her views with the occurrences of every day; it is not for a single symptom she is called upon to prescribe, but for that aggregate of phenomena and their general influence, which constitute the indications of health or disease. Perhaps nothing can exert a more injurious influence upon the young, than that ever-changing system of instruction, which will arise from this partial, and hasty, and superficial estimate of character; for not only will the remedy employed, be generally ill-suited to the existing condition of the mental system; but also, very frequently, the real source of the apparent disposition will be entirely overlooked and mistaken. It is then, the general direction and bent of all the actions of the soul which must be considered, as well as the influence exerted over them by *temper;* it is the prevailing features which shadow out the character, as a thinking, acting, sentient being; it is the correspondence, or the want of

affinity between *professed motives*, and independent actions, which are the consequence of *real motives;* it is the inquiry into the chief objects of desire, the pursuit of which involves the largest share of interest and devotion; and the nature and prospective bearing of those objects; it is to ascertain what habits and customs appear to be prevalent in the little enclosure and retreat of infantile existence; what seem to be the characteristic wishes and amusements of the mind; what is the particular mode of its feeble judging powers, in things not placed beyond the reach of its capacity; it is to judge of its method of observation, and aptitude for reasoning; it is to ascertain how the economy of its little expenditure is guided; and in fact, to watch over every thing which can give an acquaintance with the actions of mind, and their motives; to accumulate the results of these several inquiries, to estimate their relative importance, and having given to all their due weight and measure, both as separate principles, and in their collective influence, to determine what is that prevailing mould which we term *disposition*, and from which the character will by and bye stand out in distinct and undeniable lineaments.

We shall elucidate the importance and the application of this principle by illustrating its employment upon two very different characters, which may be variously termed according to the mood of the inquirer, the amiable, the yielding, the docile, the vacillating, and the unstable;

and the unamiable, the firm, the persevering, the unbending, and the obstinate. It may be here remarked, *en passant*, that if the same character will admit of such different appellations, according to the view taken by the parental inquirer, how important it is that she should be divested of prejudice; and that she should bring to the investigation, a mind anxious only for the real good of her children, unwarped by feeling, not blinded by excessive affection, sincerely desirous of ascertaining the whole truth, undaunted by difficulty, uninfluenced by partiality; with a correct judgment, inflexible to ill, and obstinately just.

The yielding disposition is not uncommon; it is attended with peculiar danger, and requires incessant care and watchfulness. The first impression of this character is pleasing, and as such, it often obtains credit for more than it deserves, and procures for itself a larger share of esteem than it is justly entitled to. For upon diligent inquiry, it will be found, that this gentle yielding, this tenderness for the opinion of others, this docility of judgment, arises often from vacillation and unsteadiness of principle, rather than a freedom from prejudice, openness to conviction, the formation of deliberate views, and subsequent government of the conduct by these determinations. *Feeling* influences the judgment more than principle, and the stimulus of occasion usurps the sway over the cooler dictates of reason. But even here, there is to be observed a degree of caprice, the absence of constancy and uniformity of

result, which is in truth rather to be ascribed to a want of energy, and positive feebleness of purpose, than to the influence of benevolence or good nature. Though favourable to the reception of truth, it is equally assailable by error, and is readily drawn aside into perversity, folly, indiscretion, and vice. It is easily persuaded and subjected to the dominion of prejudice; it wants firmness to resist temptation, and where this is presented to the judgment *first*, or to *it through the medium* of the affections, it is more particularly operative upon this state of mind; the character is deflected from the right way; its whole course is marked with debility; it stumbles and falls. Errors of opinion; a frequent change of views; a fondness for doubt on the one hand, or of uncompromising belief on the other; scepticism in matters of religion, or superstition, credulity, and enthusiasm, particularly characterize opposite conditions of this yielding disposition, and make its possessor an easy prey to the designing and the crafty. In matters of conduct too, this flexibility of temper will often induce a criminal compliance with the habits and maxims of those around us, rather than a steady uniform adherence to fixed and immutable principles. Much may be accomplished by the aid of education, and by the judicious employment of sound data, on which to ground rational and consistent thought and action; the disposition to yield is to be discouraged, and a counter operation is to be excited, by calling into action principles of a more solid aspect; or,

in other words, by cultivating that firmness which we have before mentioned as forming another great characteristic of mind.

This latter (firmness) is marked by steady perseverance in pursuit, by ardour and unvarying constancy of affection, and by a degree of inflexibility which may be mistaken for obstinacy and mechanical opposition, and which *may* give an unamiable impression to the character. But it is not so generally: and under proper limitations, it is this which will lead to decision of purpose. Determined obstinacy is more frequently the result of early mismanagement than of natural disposition: it does however frequently exist in the latter form: it is then only to be recollected, that it arises from a good principle in excess, viz. firmness of purpose, perverted by that melancholy tendency to evil, which so prominently distinguishes the children of Adam; and which is always to be overcome by the parent, by a steady adherence to principle on her part, and by never suffering a single triumph of self-will on the part of her offspring. The mother's authority must always be paramount: she must always be victorious, and wo to the little being whose instructor is not possessed of firmness sufficient to accomplish this success.

While obstinacy sometimes marks the manifestations of mind in the *firm*, *indifference* more rarely, but occasionally, places a barrier in the way of successful education: there is a want of feeling, an impassiveness of impression, which

forbids its subject to be roused by the high and holy prospect of virtue, or by the ugliness and deformity of vice; it passes through life unheeding and uncared for; it is not remarkable for any *great, good, or bad* qualities; does not possess determined principles; is little careful as to what shall actuate its conduct; and subjected as it is to the common infirmities of man, without a desire to oppose them, it is too commonly found on the side of all that is hurtful in society, or erroneous in opinion. If care be taken to avoid these dangers,—rocks on which many a would-be decided character has made shipwreck, the firm disposition will deserve to be cherished and encouraged. While the former of these is too readily influenced by the opinion of others, the unyielding is perhaps too careless concerning it. The golden mean will be the surest guide: the opinions of *others,* as *matters of faith,* or *grounds for conduct,* are not to be received; but the shades of character which these designate are entitled to their due weight, to throw light upon the philosophy of action; to be estimated in the balances of reason and religion; to command respect and attention, so far as they are consistent with truth; to be treated with candour and kindness, where they are opposed to this rule; and to be allowed their full meed of concession, on every point which is not at variance with principle. We may not become the slaves of opinion; neither should we expect or wish to tyrannize over it; a deference to its dicta, and obedience to the *conviction*

arising from its *coincidence* with the unchangeable nature of truth,—these are the great yet defined limits to its influence.

Having arrived at an acquaintance with the natural disposition of the child, its *direction* and *amelioration* will form the grand objects of the parent: very much may be accomplished in educing, and carefully guarding the application of that which is good; and much also in governing, subduing, and neutralising the influence of that which is bad. It will be always the part of education, to encourage the growth of the former, and to repress the influence of the latter. But these objects involve a variety of considerations, by an attention to which alone, can they be successfully promoted. As a principle applicable to every case, it may be asserted that great delicacy of tact is required in the moral management of these indications, and that without it, success is scarcely to be hoped for, or expected.

The disposition, though naturally good, may have been soured by neglect, or it may fail of producing its legitimate fruits, in consequence of not being *supported* in its feeble purposes, or *directed* to its proper objects, or *guided* and instructed in the mode of its exercise. Thus, for instance, a good natural disposition, apart from this presupposed care, may form a "*mighty good sort of man*," but nothing farther; that is, a harmless and inoffensive, but not a useful and beneficent being. But is it possible, that one who *fails* in the performance of duty can be harmless and in-

offensive? Is it possible, that negative goodness, the absence of gross evil, can be placed in the room of that activity of practical piety, which alone can give value to the character. Society can never be improved by such of its members: they will act as a dead weight upon its interests, which will be *retarded* rather than advanced by their influence and example. It is then not only necessary to *stifle evil tempers,* but to educe and cultivate those which are amiable, to guard them from evil, and to guide them to a proper exercise; since if reduced to action without judgment, they will not be accompanied by the expected results; and when most relied upon, will occasion disappointment, by rendering *that* inert and valueless, which if judiciously employed, would have been inestimable. The proper circumstances under which the principle, or class of principles, of which disposition forms the expression, and upon which it *ought,* and can alone be securely grounded, must be distinctly pointed out: obstacles to its exercise must be removed; it must be supported in difficulty, instructed in doubt, and strengthened by retaining the *principle,* and the *active disposition* in intimate, constant, and uniform apposition, so as to fix and concentrate the conduct, by giving it an indestructible basis, and a worthy object.

While the good disposition is cultivated, and opportunities for its exercise and development are studiously afforded, the heart must be prepared to combat with circumstances, which in

their uncontrouled influence would give rise to evil and opposing tempers, and their inevitable result when indulged, viz. *bad disposition*.

The anxious parent will also seek to *ameliorate* what she cannot wholly subdue, and to supply what is defective. A naturally violent disposition, unrestrained, and permitted its full agency over the mind, will soon increase its demands; it will be more and more imperious in its dictates; it will obtain complete possession of the heart, and sway the mental actions into obedience to its impulse, so that all the manifestations of mind, will be tinged and deteriorated by it. This occurs in aggravated instances; but in all cases, a single connivance of evil disposition, leads to repeated indulgence, and this again to habitual gratification; hence the vast importance of improving that which cannot be entirely superseded. This object is to be effected, by shewing the child, the mischievous tendency of the temper or disposition in question, and the danger of its supremacy; by teaching the necessity for its continual repression; by assisting in the regular performance of this difficult and painful duty; and by drawing out into action, and stimulating into prominence, other dispositions, which when *established*, will in some measure abolish the necessity, for constantly struggling to oppose and to remove that which is banefully operative.

The suppression of evil temper and disposition must not however be taught as consisting in *mechanical opposition* to their influence; but it must

be inculcated on the *principles* of divine truth; since these are the only motives, which by the grace of God, will be rendered permanently influential upon the conduct, or which can be at all relied upon in the hour of difficulty and of trial. If the temper be unsubdued, the sacrifices of principle it requires, will continually increase; if it be uniformly governed, its influence will be more easily opposed and subdued; and in both cases, exactly in proportion to the number, and the importance of the occasions on which the victory has been gained, or defeat has been experienced. But the parents' work is not yet done, since there remains to be supplied whatever is defective. Where there is one dominant temper, it will very generally happen, that that to which it stands opposed is imperfect, or the latter would have regulated the former, and the equilibrium of their mutual influence would have been sustained. Establish this natural counteragent, and render the mind less susceptible of the morbid operation of *that* to which it stands in the relation of intimate sympathy, and a great point will be gained.

In correcting evil temper and disposition, and in obviating the tendency of the individual to be acted upon by their influence, it is of the first consequence to be thoroughly acquainted with its nature, its changeful form, its variety of appearance, its modifications of power under different circumstances, together with all its associated *connexions*. The knowledge of a disease is more

than half its cure, and without it, there can be no chance for the just application of remedial measures. Parents, and even subordinate agents, should be exceedingly cautious, that they do not so act towards a child, as wantonly to irritate and teaze it, to sour the temper, and occasion a lurking discontent, and fretfulness, and peevish irritability, which too frequently lead to the solicitation, and easy victory of some powerful evil passion. Totally to *eradicate* the natural predisposition is perhaps impossible; and if possible, would not be desirable, since it would destroy the identity of the character: but the tendency of this original bias, may be regulated and controuled; its influence may be over-ruled; its operations may be governed; and its agency may be repressed.

In accomplishing these great objects, the mother will not only estimate the intellectual capacity of her child, encourage and develop its growth, and support its power when feeble: she will not only teach its tender shoots to cling around her for the strength they do not possess in themselves; defend them from the injurious agency of passion; correct their obliquities; repress their too luxuriant action, which threatens to reduce the mind to that irritable state, in which it may become incapable of receiving or retaining solid instruction,—and when from its want of uniform reference to principle, it is liable to act, and to be acted upon by feeling only: but she will consider her work as only half done, if while she

gently leads the timid and the weak, and encourages them to slowly augmented efforts, and fatigues by exertion, and by conscious failure, the strong, the lively, and the active, she do not also carry her views beyond the purely intellectual or recipient faculty, and perceive that her efforts may be efficiently directed to a higher object; and that education may be made the means of correcting, confirming, or reforming the mould of the temper and disposition. She will anxiously trace the earliest dawn of action, as designative of the influence these possess; and she will seek to foster what is right in conduct, and bring it into prominence; to correct what is likely to become a snare; to strengthen what is feeble, and call into active being that which lurks in the retirement of the heart.

The child is not merely an *intellectual* being, but is possessed of, and influenced by, passions and affections, all of which will materially act upon the character, as well as detract from, or minister to the vigour of the mental manifestations. There is no possibility of separating these considerations. In the complex creature man, as seen by a superficial observer, he appears a mass of contradictions and inconsistencies; but a close and intimate acquaintance with his nature, will shew that this want of order is only apparent, and arising from our ignorance of the laws, which though unseen and unknown, do certainly operate in binding up these seeming circumstances into a beautiful and harmonious system of united and

independent action, of which we trace the effects, although we cannot follow any step of the process. So it is with light and heat, the laws of gravitation, the chemical agency of electricity and galvanism, the influence of magnetism, the efforts of simple volition, the application of human reason to any given object: we trace their history from their effects; we reason upon them, and learn many of the phenomena which constitute invariable rules of their action; but there are many others which we cannot fathom, and we remain as ignorant as ever of their real nature. Yet we reason upon what we *do* know, and what we cannot explain of their effects, we most naturally ascribe to that ignorance, which we allow, obscures from our notice, their primary laws.

Without wasting our time in any curious inquiry into what constitutes the aptitude for particular disposition, we may further assert, that in *addition* to this predisposition, these mental phenomena are attached to natural constitution by early action, by education, by indulgence, by continued habit, and by youthful prejudices, which root deeply in the mental soil, and acquire a vast accession of strength by time, and above all, by that which is miscalled experience, but which as applied to prejudice, is nothing less than a succession of *errors*, perpetuated by the recurrence of the original error, laden with the accumulated weight of years of mismanagement, sophisticated thought, perverted judgment, and misgoverned passion.

Again, those mental manifestations which are not naturally active, should be early exercised, or by the inordinate growth of other more commanding features, the development of the former will be impeded, and their strength impaired: they will remain puny and inefficient, while their power will be quickly impugned by their more hardy or overbearing associates. But if stimulated into importance, they will, on the contrary, form a truly valuable barrier against dispositions, which may have been repressed by principle; but which require the constant exercise of the original counter-agent, as well as the sleepless supervision of the parent, to hinder them from again asserting their claims to be heard.

We have already seen, that there is a great difference in original disposition; that some children are naturally gentle, docile, easily led, and weak; that others are stubborn, wilful, obstinate, and morose; while others again are characterized by the predominance of envy or malice, selfishness or peevishness, discontent, or pride, or excessive volatility; we have already seen how these different states may be influenced by religious instruction: but it becomes a question how the mind may be strengthened and guarded against their influence, so as to be less liable to be surprised by their sinister agency, upon its unprepared and defenceless manifestations. We have moreover seen, that the former character is too plastic, too easily moulded by circumstances, too capable of being acted upon by impressions which

it ought to resist; that its native mildness will be a snare; that it will be decided only, while all things are smooth around it; and that it will yield before the rude blast of opposition, the sigh of the wintry storm of adversity, the turbulence of conflicting passion, or worse than all, the sunshine of this world's approbation. The indication here is obvious, viz. to enforce the entire dependence of action upon principle, of principle upon the word of God; and the absolute necessity of a constant reference to both, in order to render conduct either free from danger, or from imperfection. A moment's reflection must convince, how difficult it is, to make the mild and open, ingenuous character, really conscious that *others* will be actuated by designing errors, or evil in any of its hydra forms: nature has formed it *unsuspecting*, and it is easily *betrayed*. The parent will often find a secure (though an indirect) remedy in intellectual, rather than in moral instruction; for if the tone of the mind can be raised in this way to a certain extent, and attention can be fixed; if it can be taught to deduce effects from their causes; if it can be induced to reason out consequences from the collection and mutual relation of a certain number of acknowledged principles, and to receive that only as established which it is capable of appreciating, though it cannot demonstrate, it will assume the mould of *reason*, and will carry its impression into active life, an impression which will prove a most important

defence, and which will induce the individual to ask, before he acts, before even he admits of the validity of a conclusion, is it consistent with reason? Conviction arising out of deliberate judgment is the object sought after; and in morals is analogous, and of *equal force* with the *demonstrations* of mathematicians.

This observation perhaps requires some further explanation; or it may be thought that too great power has been allowed to *reason*, too little to the moral tact of conscience. But let it be remembered, that by the proposition, it is supposed that reason is exerted upon the dictates of revelation; and that conscience results from an interior judgment formed upon the same basis. No fears need be entertained from teaching a child to *reason*, where this is *subordinated* to revelation, and where the difference is rightly understood, between those things which are *beyond reason*, and those which *are opposed to it*. Of the former class, there are many facts, and maxims, and opinions which are adopted without hesitation, *because* they are recorded by the pen of inspiration, which as *infinitely superior to reason*, are not fit subjects for the exercise of this principle, and which then stand in the place of reason, only with the additional authority of conscience, and the weight of omniscience: but of the latter, or those which are *contrary to reason*, man does not adopt them, or bow to their influence, *because* they are opposed to his own judgment and con-

viction, to the voice of conscience, and to the authority of revelation. The fear then of placing reason in the room of obedience to the will of God is quite chimerical; since it is a talent, which if duly exercised can only add to the glory of God, and secure the performance of what *he* enjoins. Here it is therefore, that the study of *Euclid* will be eminently beneficial; attention to his demonstrations will not render the mind *less* impressible by truth, but will preserve it from yielding to the impulse of error, will enable it to detect inconsequential reasoning, and will fortify it against the dogmas of designing profligacy. This study will however, only form one great feature *of a system* which will be pursued from the *earliest* indication of mental power, and which by accustoming the mind to *reason*, will diminish its tendency to be acted upon by *feeling*. In the completion of this system, the demonstration of fixed science must not be very early resorted to; for it may then be capable of impairing the mental vigour, by creating too large a demand upon its exertions, and thereby depressing and enfeebling the power which is necessary to sustain them. The criterion for the utility of this study, is not to employ it as a remedy, until the demonstrations of reason can be relished.

The hand of the instructress, may in like manner counteract, or encourage any other form of natural disposition, by some of the means which nature and art, reason and religion, science and

revelation, have placed within her power, but which we cannot now particularize; the above is merely the exemplification of *a principle*, which must be left for its application to the immediate judgment of the parent. We shall, therefore, now proceed to notice some of the more frequent characteristics of childhood, as pride and self-conceit—disobedience to parents—the love of pleasure, and carelessness of religion.

CHAP. X.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—ON PRIDE AND SELF-CONCEIT.

These principles are thrown together for united consideration, because of their mutual affinity, and from their interchange of motive: since the former commonly arises from the opinion we may have formed of the great and good qualities we possess, or *think we possess;* since it enlarges the diameter of our self-importance; since it borrows not support from the opinion of others; and since it places the circle of individual enjoyment in self alone! Hence the common observation, that such an one is "*bloated out with pride;*" the views of his own estimation are extended beyond their just measure; and although when amalgamated with the complex character of man, it may not be always easy to unravel the perplexities and interlacings of thought and action, yet it may not perhaps be unfair to state, the gradations of this principle, as consisting in *ignorance,* leading to an erroneous judgment of self, a conceited view of our own good qualities, and the fully formed state of the mind, which we denominate *pride.*

Thus originating in evil, much good cannot be

expected to result from its influence; but it will be shewn hereafter, that this pride, so natural to the human heart, *may* be rendered available for *some good purpose;* and it is highly desirable, if the last traces of a principle of wrong which cannot be wholly eradicated, *may* be converted into the agent of some useful consequence.

Pride influences the children of men, almost from the cradle to the grave; it is one of the first developed dispositions; it cleaves to the individual through all the mortifications of collision with an envious and detracting world, and is perhaps scarcely ever completely subdued, till mortality shall have been swallowed up of life; till we shall have been transformed into the image of *Him* who was meek and lowly—who was despised and rejected of men, who was oppressed and afflicted, yet opened not his mouth; who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, who made his grave with the wicked, and humbled himself to the death of the cross for our transgressions—who when he was reviled, reviled not again, and who with all the consciousness of his divine mission, and of his infinite power, wisdom, and knowledge, yet gave an undeviating example of that humbleness of thought, and feeling, and conduct, in which consists the true greatness of Christianity, and the influence of which raises its possessor more and more nearly to an assimilation with the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven. Pride is so incorporated with the mental manifestations, as to form an active, constant

principle; and its natural and uncontrouled tendency, as being directly opposed to the character of Christ, must be towards evil. Its *effects* are not so visible in after life, either from a lesson of humility having been obtained by the deeply-felt mortifications of experience; or perhaps more frequently in consequence of wearing an artificial web of manner, that we may be enabled to disguise it more artfully from the notice of others, and thus avoid the aggravation of our mortification, which arises from the triumphant sneer of a more successful competitor.

Thus then the influence of pride is extensive and baneful, since it is hostile to the reception of the humbling truths of Christianity, which teach its disciples to be patient towards all men, meek, lowly, distrustful of self, and to esteem others better than themselves. It produces and fosters a self-righteous principle; and prevents the heart from acknowledging its own sinfulness and need of a Saviour, because it cannot entertain a deep feeling of its unworthiness; while it is induced to rely on the efficacy of its exertions, and is blinded to the fearful evil and awful danger of sin, thus retaining the mind under cover of the night of ignorance, and in the gloomy security of arrested progress. Yet with all this torpifying influence, such is its extensive power, that under different circumstances pride becomes a restless principle, continually producing uneasiness: we cannot pass through life without its being perpetually wounded, and this wound is

deeply felt, difficultly borne, and not easily healed. It is also frequently the parent of prejudice, and as such leads to unjust and injurious views of men and things, and occasions personal, domestic and social unhappiness: so that in its common acceptation it is evil in itself; opposed to the law of God, and the character of Christ; it conducts to error; militates against our happiness, and impedes our usefulness, and therefore the parent has the most powerful motives to subdue a principle, which can only be effectually extinguished or superseded by the power of divine grace, producing holiness of heart and life; yet which, as an active and influential motive, may be in a great degree kept under by habit and attentive correction.

This natural product of the heart of fallen man —nay more, this principle which *produced* that very fall, and which is so directly at variance with the christian religion, that it is even now the greatest obstacle to its reception, will require continued watchfulness. Humility is the prominent characteristic of the disciples of *Him* who impressed the necessity for the entire influence of this disposition on his followers: and it has attached to its exercise the highest promise of good, for "their's is the kingdom of heaven." It is remarkable, too, that this is the very first of the beatitudes, as if of primary importance; as if it formed a *basis* for the christian character, and as if its impression should be invariably and deeply marked on every other mental manifesta-

tion. Not only is the principle of pride hostile to the reception of the humbling doctrines of Christianity; but their profession and belief does sometimes give occasion to the development of spiritual pride, and its consequence the security and inaction of palsied exertion, arising from a review of religious attainment; so greedily does this principle convert even that which is good into that which must of necessity become the minister of ill. How all-important, then, is the inculcation of the counter principle of dependence on the author of all our blessings; a principle of humility, which the teaching and example of Christ have shewn to be one of universal operation; which should increase from every fresh acquisition of knowledge, and which should be most carefully engrafted on every newly developed thought and feeling. So completely is this the appropriate grace of Christianity, that it cannot exist, as a dominant principle, in a heart that has not been softened by religion, and then it will grow and increase with the augmented influence of the latter; and in proportion as the christian likeness is more completely transfused into the soul, so will humility be more uniformly operative, and communicate its prevailing tinge to the conduct; since apparent piety, which can be founded on any other principle than the morality of the gospel, must inevitably proceed from false views, be resolvable into pride and self-love, and be inimical to the christian character. Having then established this principle for the guidance

of parental conduct, we shall be enabled to trace the operation of pride upon several varieties of disposition, produced from this one great source of evil.

1. Pride is manifested in very early infancy, and perhaps first with regard to dress! And does not the sound of this term drop upon the ear of parents with recollections of remorse? Does it not awaken the monitions of conscience, and excite the slumbering inquiry—may not this beneficial principle have been developed and fostered by their ignorance, or carelessness, or the want of due consideration? It is not necessary to ask, neither if it were, would it be easily determined, whether the principle of pride being found in the bosom of infancy, it would not, under all circumstances, have been forced into action: but certain it is, that children are taught to *admire dress;* and they soon become proud of that to which they have been instructed to affix considerable value, especially if it may have been carefully instilled into their minds that one article of dress is superior to another, or superior to that which is worn by others. A pitiful source of pride truly! as if man should convert the necessities of his own feebleness, *that* in which he is so much *less defended* by nature than the beasts around him, into the cause of arousing a spirit which assimilates him with the subjects of the evil one. Where parents themselves may be guiltless of encouraging this fault, they will often suffer the principle to be developed in the nur-

sery; and servants too frequently teach children to attach an undefined value to certain articles, because they are *new*, or *very pretty*, or *more costly than others;* thus encouraging a fondness for novelty, and forming a false estimate of real worth, by attaching to it some external qualities, rather than its useful intrinsic properties. There can be no objection to children being neatly, simply, elegantly dressed; nay, when this is *commonly* the case, it occurs so completely as a matter of *course* and of *secondary consequence*, that it does not inculcate any supposed pre-eminence. But where a contrary course has been pursued; where the attention has been fixed on any little piece of finery, (and let parents beware how they suffer their own vanity to induce them to decorate the persons of their offspring,) the consequence of this indiscretion will be the development of pride, and its progress towards envy, a taste for dress, a spirit of rivalry, a fondness for display, the love of dissipated society in order to afford opportunities for this foible, excessive attention to the person, anxiety to render it acceptable to others, and to attract their notice; and *whither now* is not this principle hastening us? where can we feel assured that its progress may be arrested? and that it will not terminate in the loss of all that is held most dear, in the whirlpool of vice, and the tear of penitence, if not in the anguish of remorse, and the cruel recollections of the finally impenitent, the gloomy despair of those who are left without hope?

On the contrary, where this exciting cause of the evil principle pride has been avoided, the mind is less in danger of submitting to its influence; while the temptation to dress is subordinated to juster views and motives, viz.—that clothing is intended for the purposes of cleanliness, and warmth, and protection from the influence of weather; not as an ornament to the person, or as affording a *ground* of distinction and pre-eminence. In order fully to accomplish these views, it is only necessary that in the article of dress, simplicity and neatness, the avoidance of singularity, the considerations of warmth, convenience, and propriety, should be consulted; and that the system of apparel should be the same on *every day*. It may be well for parents to consider, whether this principle be not infringed by making any marked difference in the dress on *Sunday*. It is a poor distinction for that sacred day, to make it consist in the display of gay clothing, rather than in the confessions of humility; in the idolatry of self, rather than in the worship of the Most High; and with the quick sensibility and uninformed judgment of infancy, a much more powerful impression will be made by a splendid colour, or a choiceness and fastidiousness of attire, than by all the precepts of divine truth, or by an attendance on a place of worship, or even by the loud strains of the organ.

To *err* on the subject of dress, however, it is not necessary to decorate the child with a profusion of ornament on particular occasions: a pre-

cisely similar effect may be produced by the want of *general cleanliness* in its exterior, and by observing only under especial circumstances, and extraordinary days, *that neatness which should be the universal and unbroken rule.* Again, the object in view is to be effected, not by dressing children vulgarly, for this would be to make them *careless* of sustaining their situation in society, or *proud* of their affected *singularity;* but the varying mode should be adopted according to their station, and should be characterized by cleanliness, simplicity, and a regard to propriety, which will not excite remark. And not to be too rigid, there can be no objection to ornament of a simple kind, provided children are taught to esteem it as *trifling*, and not to consider it as valuable, or as an object upon which to place their little hearts, to admire, and be proud of; since this principle, once developed, will tyrannize over the will, and enslave its power. The evil then, does not consist so much in the thing itself, as in the circumstances with which it stands connected; not in the *simple wearing* of an unmeaning bauble, but in its *exhibition*, and in the inordinate value with which it is invested.

2. Another form in which we trace the influence of pride, is in the *esteem of personal beauty*. Strange indeed is it, that parents should be so little alive to the importance of early association; so little sensible to the noxious influence of apparently trifling causes, that they heedlessly encourage that, which in a moment of cool thought, they

must be most anxious to repress, or rather to stifle ere it can be said to possess existence. Personal beauty is a dangerous possession; it need never be coveted or desired; it will rather be deprecated by the prudent, and at all events should be kept from the knowledge of the child; its unconscious innocence should not be marred by the communication of intelligence which can only produce an injurious effect. Unfortunately this disposition originates too frequently with servants. The child is taught to think itself handsome; the preservation of this personal beauty is employed as a motive to good temper; it is instructed not to spoil its pretty face by crying or ill humour, as if it were of more consequence to preserve the form of the countenance, than to obey the command of God. Thus first acquainted with the fact that it possesses personal beauty, a fact which it never should know as a child, it is next taught to estimate this possession as valuable, and to throw the scorn of its pity upon those who are less abundantly favoured by nature; and then are developed the love and enjoyment of *flattery*, fostered and nourished with all its consecutive temptations, and supported by all the frailties and imperfections of our nature; since that which is painful in the retrospect, is most gladly consigned to oblivion by the soothing accents of some deceitful tongue. By degrees, as the understanding expands, the child soon attaches *personal influence* to personal charms, and expects that all will yield to its pre-eminent importance; it be-

lieves in the omnipotence of beauty, and in the same proportion undervalues other objects of pursuit; and forgetful that at his very best, man cometh forth as a flower, and is soon cut down; that the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, and the grace of the fashion of it passeth away, it still rests on this empty gift; and pride, ignorance, and conceit, are interwoven to form the character of silly prettiness, and beautiful insignificance. To counteract this tendency, a better principle must be instilled; the young must be taught that the beauty of virtue, not personal form; to be good and to do good, constitute the worth of character: personal beauty is evanescent, and at most lasts but for a few days, while disease may destroy it at a much earlier hour: it is deeply interesting only to the wicked or the foolish, to those whom it is disgraceful to attract, or by whom it is contemptible to be noticed! and when beauty has fled, *where* are they who have rested in its continuance, who have placed their hopes on this crown of pride, and are now left to endure the cruel pang of neglect, and to feel the wretchedness and misery of life, if there be not an intrinsic value attached to the character, by the great objects of every day's action; by the infinite interest of its hopes and fears, its present conduct, its anticipations of futurity. These arguments must be constantly impressed upon the minds of children, and must be practically enforced; while at the same time, the cautious parent, well knowing the proneness of the heart

to be led astray by this passion, will keep the possession out of sight, and will guard against exciting an idea, which when entertained and cultivated, is too frequently fatal to the worth, the purity, and prosperity of its possessor. The more dangerous the gift, the greater will be the caution required to neutralize its influence, and to preserve its subject from the snares with which it is so closely environed.

3. The *pride* of intellect and acquisition, will claim the parent's attention ; and as it is a principle very extensively operative, as well with the child of genius as with the dull, the occasions for its exercise will be so frequent, as to demand the greatest vigilance. It is the mother's delight, as well as her duty, to cultivate the mind of her offspring ; but in so doing, she must be careful that she do not make intellectual pursuits, *the great good*, the first aim and end of existence. Such is the tendency of the human heart, that no sooner does the understanding obtain a little knowledge, than it fancies itself *wise ;* and if this error be suffered to grow, and to maintain its influence, it will soon absorb the mental powers, and oppress them with the withering mildew of perverted talent. The immediate remedy for this state, is the acquisition of more knowledge ; for thus it is that the child may possibly acquaint itself with its own ignorance, and learn first of all, the principle which is the basis of all true science, and the offspring of that modesty and diffidence, with which it should ever be accompanied ; viz. that the hu-

man mind is, and ever must remain, grossly ignorant of many things which it might acquire, and ought to know; and that even if it possessed all accessible information, there is yet a boundless field of inquiry on which it never has entered, and cannot hope to explore. But the infusion of this extensive knowledge does not invariably create the distrust which can alone render safe its possession; for there are minds so constituted, that they cannot, or will not feel the poverty of their highest attainment, and will perversely compare their step in advance, not with what it might have been, if their talents had been improved to the utmost, or with the immensity of the field of investigation; but with OTHERS whose powers of industry have been less than theirs: and conclude by drawing from the comparison a flattering estimate of their own possession. Or there are individuals, the development of whose judgment has not kept pace with their literary hoarding, and who become, by a similar process, conceited and pedantic, while both characters transfer the worship of their hearts to the idol intellect, and yield their whole soul to its enthralling influence. The pride of learning is the most obstinate, self-willed, and uncontroulable, as well as the most difficult of cure. This difficulty consists in the constant attempt to discourage pride, at the same time that a thirst *for knowledge* is fostered; that *true knowledge* which is valuable in itself, and which also forms a powerful means of subduing pride. The subjugation of this principle is however to be at-

tempted by shewing the child *how much* it is ignorant of, that others are acquainted with; by detailing how comparatively small a quantity of knowledge *is* or *can be* acquired even by those more highly gifted individuals, the bounds of whose ignorance are so much more circumscribed than its own; by proving the littleness of the human intellect from its incapacity to comprehend even natural events, the common phenomena of every day and every hour; and the positive feebleness of its highest aspirations, in consequence of finding every where a barrier placed to its researches. It is to be attempted farther by shewing, that this incapacity is the consequence of sin, and of that perverting change which has passed upon all men since the fall, by which man has lost the image of his high original, and the powers of his mind have been stunted and misapplied by their alliance with gross, feeble, expiring materiality. It is again to be attempted, by shewing the superiority of christian knowledge to that which is merely intellectual, the infinite value of the humility of the gospel, and the real worthlessness of the pride of learning,—a possession which the slightest cold will deprive of its power to please, which the fever of a day may obscure perhaps for months, and which a more powerful bodily impression may eclipse for ever: for it should always be kept in view, that genius and insanity are most nearly allied, and that there is but a step, a single step between the highest *excitation* of intellectual health, and the *first irrita-*

tion of disease—a disease too, before which the accumulations of studious years, of midnight studies, of late and feverish rest, will all crumble into the disjointed hallucinations of the maniac! A similar result is moreover to be attempted, by shewing that the power of obtaining knowledge of every kind, is *the gift of God; he* confers the talent, and man is bound to use it to *his* glory; and surely there is nothing to be proud of in a boon, however splendid, which we receive as needy suppliants and dependants! And lastly, this is to be attempted by inculcating the superiority of religious knowledge, and by proving that every pursuit should be subordinated, to this first and most sublime object of interest; so that a just estimate of the value of human knowledge, circumscribed, poor, and perishing as it is, may be formed, and may preclude the indulgence of a principle of pride, where in fact there is no plausible room for its exercise!

How careful then should parents be that they do not encourage this principle in their children, by exhibiting their attainments, and by teaching them to think too highly of their powers and progress. Pride, when uncontrouled, is active and imperious in its agency; it grows with our growth; it is fostered by every day's acquisition; it is nourished by the breath of praise; its influence is extended by the incense of adulation from inferiors and dependants; it is supported by the indolence or the ignorance of less highly-gifted individuals; it is strengthened by the recollections of

the former want of knowledge; it is stimulated by the hope and anticipation of fresh acquisition; and it requires every day a larger sacrifice of principle for its support! But pride goeth before a fall, and a haughty spirit before destruction; while humility and sincerity will triumph over every opposition. The means of checking this disposition must be greatly varied, according to the nature of the exciting cause which may have called it into action; but in *every case*, one prominent feature of instruction will always be, to inform the heart, and to teach the child a knowledge of its sinfulness and deceitfulness; and that this is the offspring of a depraved will, alienated from the living God, and which can only be restored by an interest in Christ, who is made unto us *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*

But we have often heard of a *just and proper pride;* a respect for ourselves; an equitable estimate of character; a stimulus to good action, and great and noble daring; a principle of fortitude; a sentiment of honour; a seeking after the highest degree of attainable perfection; a preservation from low and grovelling vice; the support of consistent good; a motive to dignity and purity of conduct and inclination; the emulation of all that is valuable; the fear of all that is evil, and of other good qualities, as referred for their origin to a principle of *pride.* It *surely cannot be* that the disposition we have been contemplating can be ever *in itself good;* and it *surely cannot be* that

the accumulated *observation* of ages can be *entirely false!* What then is the principle to which these manifestations ought to be referred? what is the nature of that principle which *sin has constituted pride*, but which, *anterior* to its polluting influence, existed as a *principle of good*, implanted by the omniscient power of *Him* who created man in his own image, and who pronounced upon him that he was *very good?*

That we may arrive at a satisfactory solution of this problem, we must consider a little more in detail the bearing of those circumstances to which we have alluded. Man was created after the image and likeness of God; not surely as regards his corporeal substance, which was formed from the dust of the earth, but with respect to his "incomprehensible and eternal soul;" that spiritual principle, which was infused into his body, and whose powers and capacities were capable of assimilation, though at an infinite distance, with the attributes of divinity. These powers, though limited, even in a state of innocence by the *material organ* through which their manifestations were to be conducted, were originally much greater and more perfect than they now are. This we infer from the record which has been left us of the *knowledge* of the first man Adam, unto whom God brought every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, to see what he would call them: "And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field; and whatsoever Adam called every living

creature, that was the name thereof." We have abundant reason to believe that these names were not an arbitrary collocation of sounds; but that they were signs of ideas, and designative of the nature or habits of particular animals: and as the minute acquaintance with nature's laws, and operations, and instincts implied by the supposition, could *not* have been the result of experience, it follows that the knowledge of the first man must have been of a much higher order than that of any one of his most highly-gifted posterity. And even supposing that this knowledge could have arisen from *extended experience,* we shall still arrive at the same result, and shall be forced to adopt an identical conclusion, since where *now,* or at any antecedent period of this world's polluted history, could be found the gigantic mind which would embrace such diversified objects of inquiry, such repeated and extensive experience? If such be the case with the *knowledge* of the first man, so also with regard to those attributes of mind upon which this *acquisition would be founded,* as the faculties of attention, perception, reason, imagination, judgment, will, &c.: so also with those which would be influenced and acted upon by the possession of superior acquirements, as the faculties of reflection and imitation, memory, conscience, habits, affections, passions, &c.

From this state of riches man fell by transgression, lost the image of God, and the love of holiness; his knowledge was contracted and debased; the powers of his soul were perverted;

he was alienated from God, and became the servant of sin; he lost his original righteousness and excellence; every faculty was debased, and the thoughts of his heart were only evil! This change of his nature, effected by his fall, and which was the consequence of his transgression, has consisted not in the communication of *new faculties*, the addition of *new principles*, or the creation of *fresh affections*, for *this* would have required the creating power of Omnipotence; but only that the faculties of the mind have been distorted and beclouded, curtailed in their influence, and rendered propense to evil. Satan was permitted thus to mar the noblest work of the Almighty; and that which *was* "very good," lost every characteristic of goodness, and became feeble, erring, sinful. And if this be granted, we shall find every principle of evil which we now deplore, to be the absence or perversion of some originally good quality conferred upon man by his Maker; but which he has entirely superseded, by having lost the power, the desire, the will to exercise it, and by having fostered and cherished that awful change which sin has impressed upon it. The *manifestations of evil*, as they exist in the human mind, are not *new principles*, but the ruined and perverted state of that which was originally perfect, beautiful, and glorious, pure and immaculate from the creating hand of the Almighty.

So then with regard to the disposition we are now considering, pride is not a *new* principle, but the *cruel perversion of some good;* and so com-

plete has been this destructive change, that we do not even possess a name for its original, but which we may believe to have consisted in *a desire of excelling*, and therefore of *employing all the powers and faculties to the glory of God.* Can any view of this subject, more deeply crimson the countenance with the glow of shame, than this truly painful consideration? And if such be the case, we shall probably find some traces of the original held out for our imitation, in that glorious scheme of redemption which was intended for the restoration of fallen man.

Thus, while we are exhorted to *strive* to enter in at "the strait gate" by the considerations of the difficulties of the way, the fewness of those who do enter upon that path, and the value of pursuing with energy, the way which leadeth unto life, and of avoiding that broad and easy road which conducts the multitude to destruction; we are encouraged in this pursuit by having the character of our Saviour set before us for imitation, that high and sacred pattern of purity and holiness, which it is our duty, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to copy, and to emulate; to seek after conformity to his image; to resemble in his devotion to his Father's will; to be elevated from the lower considerations of mortality; to yield ourselves to his service, and to be animated with the hope of being kings and priests unto God, even the Father. The imitable perfections of our Saviour's character, are placed before us, and addressed to that renewed principle, restored

by divine grace, the desire to resemble him, the wish to live to his glory, the love of virtue, the anxiety to excel, to grow in grace, and in increasing conformity to his will.

Every man in his moments of cool abstraction from the world; in the seasons of retirement from the stimulus of society; and in the secret communings of his heart with itself, forms a tolerable estimate of his own character; he sees the motives which actuate him, and knows his own real weight; and however much the world may give him credit for talent, or piety, or any other good, which he does not possess; however anxiously he may wish to maintain the good opinion of his compeers, though unjustly formed, yet he knows himself; he is aware of the weak points of his character; and if he thinks justly, is not only animated by this consideration to act up to the opinion which others have formed of him, but is also stimulated to deserve it; and is actuated, in so far as he is influenced by *divine grace*, by the principle of seeking the restoration of that excellence which he has lost by sin.

In this review of himself, and in this desire to excel, the Christian is supported by looking to the character of Christ. At the commencement of *his* career, and before entering on *his* ministry, we find him subordinating some of the apparently common duties of life to the paramount desire of fulfilling his divine mission. "How is it that ye sought me?" he exclaims; "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Luke ii.

49: the triumphant reply which may be made by the disciple of Christ, who seeks to come out from the world, when he is accused by *it* of being actuated by pride, in seeking that separation from it, which our Saviour has enjoined.

Pursuing the course of our incarnate Redeemer, we find him appealing to his own divine character as an answer to the temptation of Satan; "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Get thee hence Satan, for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matthew iv. 7, 10. The weapon with which the tempter is overcome, is the paramount desire to fulfil all righteousness, to sustain the character of that God-man, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who was tempted in all points like as we are, leaving us an example to follow his steps, to honour him even as he honoured the Father, to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that we may be made like him, may support the christian character, and become more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.

As we proceed, we notice our Saviour's defence of his divine mission, against the aspersions of those who said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against him-

self; how then shall his kingdom stand. And if I by Beelzebub, cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out; therefore shall they be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Matthew xii. 23, &c. And so if his followers strenuously desire to be like him, to pluck out the right eye, or cut off the right arm of some darling sin, in order that they may resemble his character, and may be made meet for his kingdom, they may reply to the calumnies of the world, by appealing to the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and to the influence of that principle, which God has implanted for this purpose.

Other instances might be adduced in the example of our adorable Redeemer, of his appealing to his own character for the ground of his conduct; as when he healed the sick with the palsy, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he said unto the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house." Luke v. 24. Again, after declaring to the woman of Samaria, that God is a Spirit, and that they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth; and after the confession of her knowledge, that "Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things;" he asserts his claim to this character, "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." John iv. 24, 25, 26. And when, after wash-

ing his disciples' feet, he exclaims, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do, as I have done to you; if ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them." John xiii. 12, 13, 14, 15, 17. Thus at once giving an example, and a lesson of humility, and referring this to the principle of *desiring to excel,* which in its miserable pollution, has perversely engendered that pride, which is so abominable in the sight of God. And again, towards the close of his mission, and shortly before the consummation of his finished sacrifice, he appeals to the past events of his life, and pleads them in that beautiful prayer which has been recorded by the evangelist John, "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory, which I had with thee, before the world was." John xvii. 4, 5. And lastly, during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, he prays, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matthew xxvi. 39. Thus plainly indicating that the grand aim of his eventful life, was to do the will of God, to fulfil his character as the Saviour of sinners; and that this hope, this devotion, this desire, sustained *him,* when *his* soul

was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; when *he* suffered the intolerable agony of the desertion of his heavenly Father; when the chastisement of our peace was upon *him*, and when by his stripes we were healed.

If then the *desire after excellence* be a principle of the christian religion; if it actuated our Saviour through life; if it form a groundwork for action, and a motive for the continuance of exertion, and a stimulus to higher attainment, it is surely one which ought to be cultivated. But this is that which has been so completely marred by sin, as to exist no longer in the human mind, *as such*, and to be found only in its debased, perverted and perverting, fallen disposition, *pride*.

Pride as *pride* can never be encouraged: it is in every point of view evil; but the original principle, the *desire to excel* may be cultivated; and when implanted by the Spirit of grace, it will subdue pride, and shew its legitimate tendency, to produce humility, by teaching man to form a just estimate of his character, and by shewing him how immeasurably he falls short of what he *ought to be*, and what *he might be*. These two objects will not be lost sight of by the parent; the aspiration after excellence will be diligently cultivated; and it will be developed in action with the prayer, that the Spirit of God, may bless the exertion, and communicate that life-giving energy, which can alone command success. With this

view, she will most carefully follow out the principle into conduct; and will shew, that it leads to entertaining a proper respect for our own character, provided that it is based upon the good motive we have supposed; provided it do not contravene the institutions of society; and provided, above all, that it be coincident with the laws of God. With these restrictions, it may assist us in forming a just view of our own worth, and worthlessness, and may sometimes save us from conduct which is degrading to a rational, humiliating to an intellectual, and sinful to an immortal being. If it may assist us in maintaining the path of virtue, save us from the pollution of vice, and enhance the traits of consistent character; if it be directed by a principle of doing towards others, as we would wish them to do to ourselves; if it be pointed towards the attainment of the highest degree of perfection, of which our intellectual and spiritual nature is susceptible; it may then become to a certain extent, the safeguard of manners, a preservative from base conduct, a stimulus to good action; it may secure from entire destruction, some portion of that dignity, which was originally conferred upon man; it may preserve from servility and abjectness, while it will purify the inclinations, ennoble the views, and instruct to emulate that which is good. But the christian parent, recollecting the hold, which pride possesses over the human heart, will feel the importance of watching

over its influence, lest it should pervert all that is good into itself; for although this is impossible, where the heart is renewed by divine grace, yet it is hers to act, long *before this renewal may* have taken place—to sow the seed, to water it abundantly, to wait for a blessing, for that early and latter rain which has been promised, and which will produce a harvest of good.

CHAP. XI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—ON DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS—ON THE LOVE OF PLEASURE—ON CARELESSNESS OF RELIGION.

Disobedience to parents is often the result of pride and self-conceit, but it will also frequently be found to have existed long anterior to their possible influence. It is a disposition which is manifested with the earliest knowledge of the nature of a command; and the state of mind which produces it, the recoil from parental submission and filial duty will be perceptible, even before that mind has been sufficiently instructed to *know*, as a matter of reason, the nature of obedience, and the necessity for its exercise.

The influence of this principle is extensive, and gives a permanent tinge to the mental manifestations. Thus, the parent is the appointed guide, the guardian, the support, the counsellor and director of the child; but if her instructions be despised and contemned; if her guidance and protection be wilfully rejected; if her advice and her counsel be lightly esteemed and neglected, what *must* be the consequence? Left to the natural waywardness of its own heart, it must

wander in ignorance; having forsaken the guide of its youth, it will pursue a devious course of vice and folly—to its legitimate termination, disappointment, misery and woe: left to its own feebleness, it will yield to the rude blast of temptation; unsupported by parental knowledge and advice, it will become an easy prey to the sins of youth, and fall a victim to the specious fallacies of the designing sceptic; *all hesitating*, indeed, when the object of belief is present and eternal good; *all credulous*, however, when the voice of conscience, the declarations of Scripture, the examples of good men, aye, even the dictates of reason and natural religion, the power and authority of virtue, immediate usefulness, or the possession of present peace, and the good hopes of futurity are together sacrificed to an adherence to some speculative dogmas. The child is constantly receiving benefits from its parents, and therefore disobedience is the practical exertion of a principle of ingratitude. At this inlet to vice and error, it easily escapes from the path of rectitude, which has been hedged about by maternal solicitude, and defended by maternal affection; and having leaped the barrier of restraint, it is exposed to the influence of the world, and its snares and temptations, defenceless and unprepared. By the existence of active ingratitude, sin has gained a firm hold upon the mind, by which it not only maintains, but extends its empire over the heart; and where will its authority be arrested? how will its government be re-

strained, or its influence curtailed? The natural barrier is removed, and a change of principles, the renewal of the heart by the Spirit of Grace, can alone enable the young to cleanse their way, by taking heed thereto according to the words of divine truth.

The child should be the parent's comfort and support; and it will become so, when it seconds her efforts for its good; when it repays her anxieties, by following the way of truth, and is mindful of her wishes, to whom it owes so much, and whose constant efforts are perseveringly directed to its happiness; but if her designs be constantly frustrated by disobedience, sorrow rests as an insupportable yet unsurmountable weight upon her heart; disorder and misrule are introduced into the domestic government; anarchy and confusion mark the progress of democratic sway; the good of the individual, the peace of the family circle, the worth of its little subjects, the good order of society, the growth of virtuous feeling, the expansion of the benevolent affections, the designs of nature, the appointments of omniscience, the development of principle, the institutions of man, the laws of God—all, all are crumbled away before the slowly, but uniformly overwhelming action of the tide of this evil disposition. Disobedience hardens the heart, renders it less susceptible of the finer feelings; the admonitions of conscience become less frequent and decided, their impression less vivid and extensive, and the whole conduct is tinged with

impropriety. In its continued influence upon the mind, it presents an obstacle to the infusion of religious principle, to the reception of the word of God, and of the lessons of parental wisdom and experience, because it provokes a state of mind precisely opposed to that in which it would be possible to "honour thy father and mother," to "hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother;" because it chooses the way of frowardness and selfishness, and will not allow the entrance of that wisdom into the heart, or perceive the pleasantness of that knowledge which are necessary, before "discretion shall preserve thee, or understanding shall keep thee;" and because it claims the right of private freedom of judgment and action; it is wise in its own eyes; it does not fear the Lord, or depart from evil; it does not trust in *Him* with all its heart, and lean not unto its own understanding; it does not in all its ways acknowledge him, or solicit the direction of his laws.

In this state of disposition, when the government of the mind is no longer vested in the parent, nor in the commands of God, it is scarcely possible to calculate the ravages of this fatal disorder; the equilibrium of moral action is destroyed; and the tide of its harmony is overborne by the fierce and desolating blasts of all that is monstrous in nature, or hateful in the sight of God—*a child warring against its parent!* As obedience is the strongest barrier to the influence of youthful temptation, so disobedience precipitates its victim along

the magic paths, which point the broadest road to sin and sorrow, and destruction. It is a devouring principle, which greedily swallows up every trace of virtuous action and religious fear; which overspreads the whole soul, and subjugates the affections to its tyrant sway. Strange indeed is it, that the power and influence of this enemy should be so undervalued, so erroneously estimated, or so despised! Strange that it should be nurtured by the parent's blind and selfish affection, rather than uncompromisingly destroyed! Strange that slight instances of disobedience should be allowed to pass unnoticed, while the laws which these infringe are the natural barriers to a thousand evils. The desert of sin which these bound is an extensive plain, with nothing to oppose the wayward progress of the traveller; the boundary line is easily overstepped, and once passed, it is impossible to find a secure resting place, short of the consummation of the greatest crimes. On either side of this boundary, sit filial affection and parental care; sufficient, when united, to preserve the young wanderer in the untried way of life; but if the one grow cold, and the other lose its vigilance, what is to prevent the most fearful consequences, ruin to the one, and bitter upbraidings of conscience to the other? How great then should be the care to preserve this boundary inviolate; and this can only be effectually accomplished by marking the declivity which leads towards it; by jealously watching that neutral territory, in which both being un-

guarded, may forget the principle of ever watching; and by abstracting the feet from a path so dangerous as that in which it may be thought allowable to permit the fire of filial love to burn dimly; to see it oppressed with the ashes of distaste, dissatisfaction, and indifference; to watch its feeble smouldering, without seeking to fan it into a flame; and to suffer the lamp of parental vigilance to go untrimmed, unsupplied with fresh oil, and to give only a flickering, uncertain and expiring light, which never can fulfil a mother's duty, in teaching her child to avoid the dangers of youth; to preserve it from temptation; to caution it against the evils of forgetting the laws of nature, reason, and revelation; and to illumine and cheer its returning path to that happier state, in which the influence of obedience may be sustained, and its power indefinitely enlarged.

The Love of Pleasure.

What is the nature of this disposition? It is that, so natural to the human heart, which substitutes the love of amusement for that of good,—the pursuit of trifles for that which is all-important and everlasting: it is that which places pleasure in the room of instruction, which barters enjoyment for peace, the folly of a fleeting hour for substantial and enduring wisdom, riot and dissipation for the feast of reason and the flow of soul. It is that which seeks the gilded hours of selfish

joy, and will not listen to the accents of wo: it is that which prefers the theatre, the concert, the ball-room, the splendid mansion to the miserable cottage of the poor, and the indigent, the sorrowing, the sick, and the dying: it is that which prefers shutting out from the mind the distress of others, in the joyous tale of its own luxuries; and which passes heedlessly through this vale of tears, without an eye to see, or an ear to hear the miseries of those around; without a heart to pity, or a hand to save the ignorant, the wretched, and the helpless: nay more, it is that which constitutes the trifling character,—one who makes the great business of life to consist in a series of littlenesses, which to a well-ordered mind, appear as the accidents of existence; as the finest dust which rests upon the surface of our globe, compared with its immensity, and with its myriads of living and immortal inhabitants.

The trifler is ever engaged in the pursuit of some unmeaning bauble, though with little energy of perseverance; he is contending, if indeed he can give himself the trouble to contend for some unimportant shade of sentiment, or some merely secondary form; or he is framing for himself uneasiness from circumstances which do not really deserve a moment's consideration. To live here so as to shew forth the glory of God, and advance the happiness of his creatures, seems to form no part of his views: this would occupy too comprehensive a field of reason and exertion, while

the great object of his desire is to pass through life, with as little exhibition as possible of bodily or mental vigour; with as little thought, and as little design, as can consist with the mere exterior of man; and having only one cherished hope, viz. that of traversing over each successive day, with the most crowded hours of ever-varying trifles, and with the slightest possible attention to all which constitutes man a rational, an intellectual, a moral, and religious being.

The germ of this trifling disposition is discernible in early life, and the first traces of a principle which we have followed to its consummation, should be most carefully watched; for the love of pleasure is natural to the human heart, and unless it be curbed by reason and reflection, it will become predominant and absorbing. It is therefore to be moderated, because the desire after unmeaning trifles, and their eager pursuit, is in itself unsatisfying, and injurious to an immortal mind; because a very large majority of the objects of *pleasure* in its general acceptation, are in themselves unlawful, contrary to the law of God, and opposed to the christian temper; and because many others become so from being *inordinate*, and in consequence only of abstracting the mind from the love and service of God and his Christ. Pleasure may be allied to our animal, social, or intellectual nature; it is the two former which are now the principal objects of attention, because they are to be found more frequently: but the intellectual trifler is not a rare character; one

who devours books for amusement, or for the mere stimulus produced by the excitement of the intellectual organ, and the pleasure which results from it; one who likes to have his attention riveted, and his fancy charmed, and his reason convinced, and his sensibilities roused; but who quits the present for some new object of pursuit, unimproved, uninfluenced in his conduct, undesirous of becoming more extensively useful.

To these several forms of the same disposition, *principle* will afford the very best means of successful opposition, and every temptation towards them is to be most carefully avoided. The danger arising from seeking after objects of pleasure, which are lawful in themselves, consists in the tendency to estimate them too highly, to become too deeply attached to them, and to make them the chief design of our pursuit. It is then peculiarly desirable, that children should be preserved from tasting this enchanting, but poisoned chalice; and when contact with the world obliges them to breathe its polluted atmosphere, they should have been steeled against its attractions, and enabled to resist its influence, by the support of good principles.

Cheerfulness ever adorns the best regulated mind; but when it degenerates into levity; when it assumes the form of noisy, ill-defined, obstreperous mirth; when dissipation is its object; when it is based on wit, and supported by ridicule; when it seeks its own amusement, not another's good; then does it become sinful, an

object of aversion, and demands the most strenuous opposition. On this fruitful stock, are too frequently engrafted *satire*, with its ugly brood of calumny, insincerity, cold-heartedness, and all the narrow, petty policy of the cynic. Innocent recreation is well suited to a period of life, before the mind has been harassed by cares, or soured by disappointment, or distorted by fixed obliquity of principle and conduct; and there are appropriate seasons and subjects for amusement in this spring-tide of life; though even here let instruction be blended with amusement; let the danger of loving these objects inordinately be obviated; let them not be considered as of primary importance; let the mind be unbent from the pursuit of more serious studies; but suffer it not to be distracted, violently agitated, or eagerly and intensely occupied; let them never stand in the place of business, or usurp the power, and interfere with the authority, or with an attention to the duties of religion; let them not absorb too much time, or engage the heart, or take the chief place in the thoughts; let them never interfere with the duties of kindness or benevolence to others, or with the commands of God; and finally, let them not unfit the mind for the performance of religious worship, or even border on any unlawfulness of desire.

There will then be two objects for parental attention, in regard to this disposition: first, to detach the mind from the love of sinful pleasure, or trifling pursuit; and secondly, to moderate its

attachments to things lawful in themselves, so that they may be enjoyed without the danger arising from excessive desire, and that they may allow the mind freedom to be engaged zealously in its all-important duties. In this, as in every similar case, it is far wiser to prevent the contraction of the morbid bias, than it is easy to moderate its inclinations afterwards.

The means of fulfilling these indications, are to impress the young with the value and importance of their season of life, and with the great objects to which its energies should be devoted ; and consequently the folly as well as wickedness of spending its hallowed hours in the giddy pursuit of unsatisfying pleasures, or unmeaning trifles. So does the gay and thoughtless butterfly spend its summer day of existence ; it is warmed into life, and cherished into activity by the grand luminary ; it unfolds its gaudy colours in its beams, flutters its wings, and in all the energy of newly created vitality, it sports in the noon-tide ray, flits rapidly from object to object, careless of expiring day ; and ere the shadows of evening have enveloped the objects of nature with her sable mantle, the circle of its joys has been run, it has lived to *live*, and if the brief term of its hours has been completed without accident, it sinks, and its memory is dissolved even with the passing day. So does the votary of pleasure; it speeds its careless hours in ceaseless activity, in the pursuit of that which *is not*, for even in its happiest mood, the heart *is sad*, and the object

of pursuit has evaded its grasp. Yet the same round of busy idleness is renewed with every morning's sun: the blessings and the gifts of Providence, the talents, the advantages of society, all are carelessly and thanklessly sipped; its mental and bodily energies are slowly exhausted, and it sinks unregretted, when the winter of life has contracted the day to its shortest span; when the evil day has come that there is "no pleasure in it, and when the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper be a burden, and desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." There is this only difference, that whereas the thoughtless insect, has in its glittering hour of pleasure, *fulfilled the design* for which it was called into existence, man has reached the termination of his days, with the accumulated load of *his mispent hours,* and now reaps the bitter consciousness, that he has lived to himself, that he has *not* fulfilled the designs of his creation, that he has *lived to live,* but that he has not *lived to die,* and that to all his fearful amount of neglected opportunities, he has to add an aggravated sum of wilful alienation from God: and again, instead of now terminating his career at the sunset of life, though the dust return to the earth as it was, the *spirit* shall return *to God* who gave it, to receive according to the deeds done in the body. "Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry; for that shall abide with him of his

labour, the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun." (Eccles. viii. 15.) Bitter irony! And when that sun shall be withdrawn from him for ever, where will be then his hope? Would God that he had never been born. Would God that he had commenced and terminated his existence with the giddy insect of his thoughtless admiration. Would God that he had not been a more unprofitable servant: that he had tasted the vanity and vexation of pleasure, that he had considered his ways and been wise. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.—Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every *secret thing*, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccles. xii. 13, 14.)

How important is it therefore for the young, that they should justly estimate the objects of attachment; that they should improve each hour of opening life; that they should imitate the industry, activity, usefulness, and energy of the bee; that they should taste the sweets of life, only to accumulate for themselves stores for future emergencies, materials for reflection, for sustaining the immortal mind with its appropriate food, and preparing for that change which awaits it hereafter. *Then* will the objects of present pursuit be not unseasonably beloved, *when* the superlative value of the soul, the excellence of heavenly pleasures, and the pure joys which result from the influence of religion, are really be-

lieved and sought after; when the disposition to a fondness for immediate pleasure is repressed by parental caution, advice, and example: when the pleasures of sense, the dissipations of the world, and the joyous festivities of vice, are supplanted by a relish for intellectual pursuits; and when the delights of intellect are held in subordination to the coming prospects of *eternity*, and to the religious duties of *to-day;* when they are not suffered to become exclusive objects of pursuit; when they are sought after with the deeply felt conviction, that however splendid may be the extent and value of literary acquirements, these alone can never satisfy the spiritual principle; and when the distinguishing mark of their being retained in their proper place is constantly kept in view, viz.—whether they are considered as the *end of life*, (for if they be, *life* in its best sense, eternal life will end with them,) or as *subservient* only to its grand design, and *useful* in proportion as they give to the character of the Christian, greater weight and influence, greater aptitude for comprehending the grand truths of his religion; greater energy and perseverance to perform them, and more abundant opportunities of usefulness.

Carelessness of Religion.

This disposition of mind, is so essentially interwoven with that which has been just considered, that it can scarcely be separated from it; and all that has been said on the former is applicable to the present subject. Yet, though the love and the

pursuit of pleasure will lead to wasting the energy of the mind upon unmeaning trifles, and will always involve a recklessness as to the interests of futurity; still, where there is not this prominent thirst after the stimulus of amusement; where there is not this incessant busy trifling, there may exist a carelessness, an apathy, a want of feeling and interest on this great subject; this first and greatest object of desire, ever proposed for the consideration of an immortal mind. And since, therefore, the foregoing observations may not reach the simply careless; and since such is the deceitfulness of the heart, that it will shelter itself under an escape from the evils connected with the love and pursuit of *pleasure*, we can scarcely close the present section without a few words on this indifference and distaste towards religious precepts, and their associated duties.

Although of the first importance to future happiness and present comfort, yet a careless neglect of religion, an abandonment of its self-denying virtues, and a dislike towards any thing serious, is commonly manifested by the young; and strange to add, except by the converting influence of the Spirit of grace, this carelessness, unless repressed in early life, will cleave to the individual, even to its very wane, and memory will be pained, and hope affrighted by the fearful sight of the careless septuagenarian tottering on the brink of the grave, without one thought of what exists beyond it, and even now making light of the invitations of the Saviour; procrastinating

serious thoughts, aye, even treating them with levity, until perhaps without a single moment for reflection, the fatal messenger arrives, and with the last words of ridicule upon his fallen lips, his soul is hurried into the presence of its long-suffering and merciful, but just and upright Judge, who has long borne with his indifference; who has renewed the despised offers of his grace; who has striven with the iniquity of his heart; who has sought to awaken the blind and slumbering by the events of his Providence; and who to the last has not relinquished his repeated solicitations, that the careless would be wise, and would lay hold of the hope set before them; but upon whom the door of mercy is for ever closed; the hope of pardon is for ever gone; "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh—when your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you."—Proverbs i. 24, 25, 26, 27. It was of those who made *light* of the invitations of the king to the marriage supper; that went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, that it was said they were not worthy, and that none should taste of the good things which had been prepared. "Therefore shall they eat of the

fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."—Prov. i. 31.

Yet this carelessness of religion, this substitution of present for eternal things, this preference of ourselves to the service of the Most High, this subordination of duty to inclination, marks the character of man from the earliest traces of reason and passion. The first feeble glimmerings of thought are characterized by their oblique tendency to earth instead of their upward inclination to their native skies; but while the mind is docile and pliant, it may be moulded by education and habit into customary attention to the outward duties of religion; for beyond this as a matter of duty, we cannot go: the religion of the heart it is not in our power to produce; yet, if we *train* up a child in the way in which he should go, we have the promise of a blessing upon our sincere and undeviating exertion.

It will be the aim of christian education to overcome the natural repugnance to all that is good; and as it has been already shewn, much is to be accomplished by the mode of communicating religious instruction, in order that the mind may be prepared and disposed to lend its attention to the concerns which demand its notice beyond the grave; to those spiritual realities which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. This carelessness and indifference is, however, a principle which must be constantly struggled

with; for it exists also with those who are farther advanced in life, as well as in such as are subjected to the giddy étourderie of youth; whose minds are enlarged to comprehend the full extent of their situation; aye, even, whose judgment is convinced of the necessity of embracing the hope set before them in the sacrifice of Christ, but whose hearts remain uninfluenced by their convictions; who rest satisfied in their speculative and historical belief, and are contented with a religious education instead of devotedness of the heart to God; who will not estimate the uncertainty of life, and who therefore cannot realize preparation for death as a duty of present and immediate, and indispensable importance; who will not practically believe in the omnipresence of the Deity; who act and think as though God saw them not, and knew not their thoughts; and who suppose, that to be religious, is to be grave, serious, morose, stern at the infirmities of others, and severe in our judgments of their conduct. A great evil arises here from the want of *cheerfulness* in some religious persons; and yet religion never was designed to make our pleasures less, but to produce that calm serenity, that sunshine of the soul, which should occasion peace, the smile of benignity, the activity of benevolence, the tear of pity, the glow of compassion, joy in the Saviour, delight in God; the love of Christ for those who are encompassed with infirmities, and fears, and cares and sorrows; and that tender construction of their conduct, which leads us not to judge,

but to hope; not to censure, but to forgive; not to seek the redress of injuries, but to pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us. A lovely portrait! to be found only under the influence of real religion; that religion which does not detract from the pleasures of youth, but improves the comforts of those who love and serve God, in keeping whose commandments there is great reward; that religion which is the great work of life, and carelessness of which is a lamentable iniquity and folly.

Carelessness of religion is not superseded by the transient trembling of Felix, who deferred to a future more convenient season, the consideration of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Religion is not the distant procrastination of serious thought; it is not the promise of a future pursuit of a distant good; it is not the lukewarmness of the "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," but the unreserved dedication of the whole man to God and his Christ—now—to-morrow—this week—this month—this year—and for ever. Parents then should diligently watch over the constitution of the minds of their offspring, and the prejudices which may be thrown in their way, in order that they may ascertain the *causes* which obstruct the influence of divine truth; in order that their sources may be removed, that their futility may be shewn, that the real state of the heart may be discovered, and its perversities be simply and affectionately detected, and its indifference exposed, and its care-

lessness confessed, its aversion to God proved, and the only way of salvation exhibited. And when once awakened from the slumber of indifference; when aroused from the uneasy dream of carelessness, and self-dependence: when energized to preserve the way of truth, it will be then the parent's duty to caution the young against resting securely in *any measure* of religious attainment; to instruct the ignorant; advise the uninformed; guide the feeble and the helpless; preserve them from the contact of evil, and obviate the difficulties which may be thrown in their way by the love of the world, the attractions of pleasure, the invitations of science, the sweets of intellectual pursuit, and the inconsistencies of professing Christians.

CHAP. XII.

ON DISCIPLINE.

On the basis of *filial obedience* rests the power which is possessed by the mother of moulding the minds of her offspring; for if this be wanting, in vain will she inculcate knowledge; in vain will she strive to correct the temper, or ameliorate the disposition, or give a proper bias to the affections. This obedience however, in order to become thus influential on the character, must be founded, not on *terror* resulting from a fear of punishment, the consequence of parental displeasure: but upon affection,—on a fear of offending and grieving the parent, as well as of infringing the laws of God. This then is the great object of *discipline*.

The absence of this principle, is one of the first active symptoms of that depravity of nature, which is inherited by all; and it is complicated and odious in its tendency, which involves in it, ingratitude to man, and contempt of the divine command. It hardens the heart, and paves the way for the commission of other sins, since obedience is a barrier placed by a gracious God, in order to oppose the tide of youthful iniquities; and when it is once overstepped, sin obtains such

an advantage over the mind, that it is easily enslaved, and led to the perpetration even of great crimes.

If we suppose for a moment, that the human mind is so constituted, that the powers of good and evil over its inclinations are nicely balanced; that its fondness for virtue is accurately adjusted to the allurements of vice; that the voice of judgment is always heard, and always listened to, even in the tempest of passion, and that it rides triumphantly over the wild howlings of unhallowed desire; if we suppose that the sentiment of religion and the power of conscience are fully equal to the influence of temptation, and the disposition to imitation; if we suppose that the human mind delights equally to lend its attention to the fruits of holiness, as to the frivolities of fashion; and that it perceives as quickly, and retains as forcibly, and recalls as vividly, and reasons as disinterestedly and as justly, and reflects as willingly on that wisdom of which "the merchandise is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold,"—which is more precious than rubies, and "all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her;" (Prov. iii. 14, 15.) as it doth on mirth, and pleasure, and laughter, and wine, and folly, and great possessions, and silver, and gold, and learning, and honour, and reputation, and connexions, and increasing prosperity,—all of which have been declared to lead to vexation of

spirit (Eccles. passim); if we suppose the imagination as easily excited, and as readily engaged, and as completely satisfied, with the sacred mysteries of our holy religion, as it is by the anticipation of some fancied good, or even by a glowing portraiture of fictitious circumstances: and if we allow the will to be entirely under our controul, and as easily directed in the pursuit of good; as firm to holy purpose; as unyielding to the influence of passion or prejudice, the attractions of vice, and the privations of that religion whose divine Author had neither form nor comeliness, that we should desire him: if we suppose that it is opposed to the agency of temptation, and constantly employed in counteracting the disposition to forget God: if we suppose all these things, and believe therefore that the young naturally possess an equal share of desire, and power to love God, and to do his will; as to be influenced by evil; even then we shall find, that in passing through life, so much more frequently will *the evil* dispositions be lighted up than the good; so much more constant will be the present attractions of vice than the future rewards of virtue; so much more frequently will the tendency to ill be incorporated into action, and associated with every feeling, and confirmed by repetition, and ripened into habit, and deepened into principle, and augmented by age, and reconciled by time, and extended by custom, and fortified by society, and backed by opportunity, and multi-

plied by occasion, and invigorated by all the circumstances of a world that lieth in wickedness, that even under this most favourable supposition, we shall find the equilibrium of health destroyed, and disorder and confusion will ensue. And when once the balance has been lost, when once evil predominates over good, every fresh indulgence of passion not only adds to the weight in the scale of the former, but also takes away from the power of resisting evil, the antagonist and countervailing good principle; so that the weight of evil not only sinks the mind constantly lower in sin and misery, but also detracts from its power of regaining the supposed equilibrium from which it has fallen. And this process is continued with a fearful increase of accumulated evil, and a diminished weight of solid worth, until one scale kicks the beam, and until the other has been so completely borne down with its progressive load of iniquity, from the first youthful delinquency, to the aggravated period, when the greatest crimes may be added to the heap, without producing any sensible effect upon the moral balance, and until the character stands confessed as openly profligate and abandoned.

Such is the progress of vice, even under the supposition of an original balance of power in choosing good, and refusing evil: but if to this view of the subject be added *the truth*, that the power to love and serve God has been already lost—that man is born in sin, prepense to evil, averse from good, easily assailable by tempta-

tion, deaf to the voice of judgment, tossed from his centre at the bidding of passion, agitated by unholy desire, hating the doctrines of the pure and holy gospel, refusing attention to the monitions of conscience, delighting in sin, wasting his precious hours over the folly of a day, rejoicing to imitate the weak and the wicked, but indulging a secret distaste for the example of the wise and good; with all his powers contracted, and limited, and debased; preferring deliberately that which satisfieth not, and spending his money upon that which is not bread; with the imagination delighting to revel upon that which is gross and sensual, earthly, devilish; and that when he would do good, evil is present with him; then do we form a just estimate of human life; then do we truly see, that nothing less than a new creating power can restore this lost balance; then, and only then, do we form an accurate idea of the vast importance of *discipline*, and of that *obedience* which is its basis, the object of which must be an uncompromising hostility to vice, from its first germ of obliquity, to its malignant consummation in crime of deepest dye; and an uniform cultivation of religious principle.

The fear of disobeying a parent, is an immediately operative motive, which guards the mind from the suggestions of evil, and produces conformity to the laws of *discipline;* and therefore since *disobedience* is in itself a great sin, and prevents the agency of parental watchfulness and solicitude; and since it exposes the soul to the

operation of all that is evil, so should it be ever guarded against, ever noticed when present, and its recurrence averted where possible, not by any harshness and severity, but by the invariable attributes of good discipline, firmness, principle, reason, and the extensive and irresistible influence of affection.

The agency of this principle will be seen, by considering the relation which the parent bears to her children. And first, she sustains the office of their *instructor*, and as such, possesses the inheritance of many anxious hours, many sleepless nights, and many an aching heart: the fervent prayer, the heartfelt sigh, characterize the deep interest she takes in this pursuit; and mark the direction which she seeks from Him who alone can support her; as well as her ceaseless solicitude to discover the best method of securing the happiness and the welfare of her offspring. These, in every situation, and under all circumstances, are the animating principles, the life, the soul of maternal action: and what is more painful than to witness all her efforts rendered unavailing and fruitless, by a mistaken laxity of *discipline;* all her designs counteracted by the influence of the principle of disobedience, which shuts up the avenues to the youthful mind, renders silent the lips of instruction, seals the ears to the voice of knowledge, and especially that knowledge which relates to the conduct of the understanding and the heart, as well as the direction of the affections to moral and religious objects.

Again, the mother is the *guide* of her offspring; she guards them from the dangers and snares with which they are environed; she directs their footsteps, points out the path in which they should walk, and shews what dangers are to be avoided, what difficulties to be overcome, what enemies to be opposed, what temptations to be resisted or escaped from, as well as the mode in which the plain path of truth is to be preserved; while she cautions against the flowery aspect of vice, and supports under the rude blasts of trial. Besides this preservation from evil, she guides the application of the mental resources, educes the slumbering, and develops the nascent faculties, and gives to each its due preponderance. But if her efforts be not sustained by regular discipline; if they be not seconded by willing obedience, and above all, if they be opposed and frustrated by filial disobedience, the influence of this attribute of the maternal character will be lost, or at the best, will be exceedingly limited; maternal solicitude will be rendered fruitless, and disappointment and sorrow will attend her path.

Further, the mother should be the *friend and directrix* of her children; she should hear and enter into all their difficulties, and endeavour to remove them; she should become the sacred depositary of all their little secrets and troubles; she should be their confessor, and be accustomed to receive an acknowledgment of all their faults and errors; she should become their only coun-

sellor, and in order to obtain the full advantage of her experience, the utmost confidence towards her, both in kind and in degree, should be encouraged; nothing should be kept back from her, whose friendship will be found more durable than the transient partialities of youth, and whose fondness will be governed by the maturity of age and reflection, and by disinterested judgment. All this is only to be effected by the maintenance of a wise *discipline*, that prudent subordination of the child to the parent, which consists in adopting the first principle of good government, viz. the surrender of the individual right and freedom of the governed on the one hand; the participation of parental wisdom, the support of her authority, the confidence of her affection, and the advantage of her knowledge on the other. This compact implies that active *obedience* which essentially links together the affection of parent and child, and without which every proposed boon of discipline crumbles into disjointed atoms, and becomes as the sybil leaves, which however wise, and valuable, and oracular when gathered up and associated in their order, are of no avail when scattered abroad by the wild and lawless tempest. The want of systematic *discipline* is the gnawing canker, which at first unseen, preys upon the very heart of the lovely structure of paternal government, till it has destroyed its vitality; till its unity and beauty vanish; and till even its existence may soon come to be ques-

tioned, when its laws and their influence are no longer discernible.

But once more, the mother is the *protector* of her children; her tenderness shines peculiarly in shielding them from the dangers which encompass their inexperience; leading them through the untried paths of early life; shewing them the right way; sustaining their feeble efforts to walk in it, and pointing out the mode of preservation: she descries the first approach of danger, and her vigilance is excited to escape from it; her whole heart is employed to avert the threatened evil, and where this is impossible, to carry them safely through it. But that eye, which from experience and knowledge of the world, and that heart, which by religion is rendered alive to the impression of danger, as well as furnished with the means of avoiding it, or of triumphing over it, will be rendered useless, and incapable of affording assistance, except through a regular system *of discipline,* and of *obedience to its laws.*

Such then being the extensive influence of this parental government, and of a refusal to yield the subjection of loyalty, let its laws be early impressed upon the mind, and constantly enforced, and let the principle of disloyalty be fairly met and combated; let it be earnestly discovered, and averted in its incipient stage. And if to the evils already detailed, as resulting from a *forgetfulness of discipline,* be added its certain and necessary influence in embittering the days of the

mother; depriving her of the pleasure she is privileged to derive from her offspring; destroying her peace and happiness, and clouding her years with sorrow, can any thing more be wanted to impress the mind with a sense of its danger, and of the necessity for avoiding it?

Insubordination is, however, a monster with a hundred heads; it demonstrates its agency in a thousand ways: when opposed at one point, and successfully opposed too, it exerts its power over another; from the destruction of one of its fruitful progeny, new species, modes, and forms are seen to arise, as if created by the very power which had destroyed the first; and it requires persevering energy and strength, the constancy of virtue, the courage of principle, the fortitude of good motive, the hopes and fears and duties of religion, the highest sanctions of Christianity, *so* to continue unwearied opposition to evil, and the unbroken advance of good, *as* to come off finally conqueror. A man does not all at once become a traitor to his king, and conspire the subversion of his government; he first infringes the laws of his country in some trifling instances; perhaps he does so with impunity, but the concealment and contrivance necessary to shelter him from the visitations of the law are irksome; he becomes discontented with that which imposes a restraint upon his inclinations, and with the wearisome vigilance necessary to escape detection and punishment; from this discontent he is rendered an easy victim to the harangue of those

political demagogues whose constant aim is to foment discord, and to alienate the affections of the people from their civil and religious institutions, of which he is taught to disbelieve and to despise the weight and the authority; and now having cast off the weightier motives to obedience, he becomes a ready prey to some subtle spirits, who have energy and wickedness enough to influence the mind to embrace *their* views; and he is employed as the basest, and the lowest, and the most degraded tool of faction; to be enlisted under the most cruel and unprincipled despotism, to become the paltry slave of treason. So is it with the parricidal treason of withdrawing allegiance from parental authority; so is it only to be successfully opposed, in what are often termed trifling instances of almost undefined insubordination. It is by neglecting these slighter occasions for the exercise of discipline, that the evil of *questioning* its authority first obtains a footing, and advances to such amazing power, unless it be constantly opposed, watched over from its first dawn, and seriously repressed with affectionate earnestness, and unbending tenderness. Thus, by uniform care, it may be kept under; but if suffered to pass unnoticed on lesser occasions, it will soon pervade the conduct, enslave the faculties, alienate the heart, and influence all the manifestations of mind.

So natural to the human bosom is this aversion from regular discipline, this spirit of insubordination, that perhaps it is scarcely possible wholly

to eradicate the predisposition ; but it *is* possible, it *is* readily practicable to subdue, to keep under, and finally to repress this restless, selfish, proud, ambitious spirit. It must however be recollected, that this can only be predicated as *true*, at a certain and an *early period* of the disorder; and it may have existed so long, and formed such intimate associations, and obtained such extensive hold of the mental system, that it *will* run its course, and that *no remedy* can overtake its progress. The correction of this vicious propensity must commence betimes, and is not to be prevented by maternal *fondness*, which presents a temptation to defer opposition, until it be too late to hope for success. The longer the principle is suffered to remain unchecked, to strike deep into the mental soil, and to throw out its branches in every conceivable direction, the more difficult will it be to controul, the more painful will be the process of counteraction.

A powerful incentive to this *early discipline*, is, that it is essential to the happiness of the child *now*, whose real peace will consist in the *paucity of its desires*, and in their willing subjection to the influence of reason and religion; and that procrastination will add to the pain which it *must* eventually feel, from curbing the wild and lawless influence of its unrestrained passions; or that it will be delivered over to the cruel agency of these tyrant principles, in proportion to whose power and activity the heart will be hardened and alienated from the word of God, and the reli-

gion of Christ. It will not do to allege as an excuse for insubordination, that it arises from the infatuation of ignorance, and will be cured by the diffusion of knowledge; this *might* indeed be true in minds which had no *bias towards evil*, but not with those so constituted, as they are, with which we have to do.

Disaffection must be opposed in its every form; in its principle and its practice, and must give way before a system of mild but persevering—uniformly affectionate but invariable—lenient but just—wise and principled discipline. Insubordination is a principle of such amazing power, that it will not do to slumber on the road, while tumult bursts his prison door; it will not do to meet it with *occasional opposition only*, which will do more mischief than good; will fan the flame of discontent; will agitate, without restraining the passions; will inspire a hope, or at least a speculation, on the chances of impunity, and will attach contempt to the wayward exertion of parental authority. Just and principled laws; mild, but certain in their punishments; and uniformity and steadiness in enforcing them, will constitute the great basis of good discipline; and by its exertions, the licentious will, will be controuled; the riotings of unhallowed temper will be restrained; the influence of disaffection will become feeble; while the power of the maternal executive will be increased, and the evil will be finally subjugated. On all occasions, when the rules of just discipline have been infringed, affectionate sorrow and dis-

pleasure should be manifested: so will the boundaries of virtue and vice be kept defined and distinct; the path of duty both to parent and child will be rendered easy, and exertion will be crowned by success; at least, the most powerful obstacles to success will be removed. Let the *heart* be kept with all diligence; let not the risings of this evil principle be neglected till they are expressed in action; let the secret thought, the first impatient feeling, the angry look be expounded; for *this* germ of evil principle will be by and by developed in action; it will increase by neglect; and may acquire such extensive power, that the effort to remove it will become fruitless. Dreadful anticipation! Disobedience established; insubordination heightened; laws contemned; piety disregarded; discipline unavailing; every effort to instruct, to guide, to counsel, to advise, to support, and to protect; every exertion for the happiness of the young rendered nugatory and abortive. *Once* it might not have been thus; but the day of hope, and of success has passed; and to this miserable result is added the recollection of antecedent negligence, the mildew of withered hopes, the pang of blasted expectation, and the anguish of disappointed affection.

In the practical application of the laws of discipline, *severity* is perfectly unnecessary, and would produce mischief; it would prove a never-failing source of error, and of *passions* even more hideous in their aspect than *the principles* whose

influence it is intended to subdue; while the latter too, under such circumstances, always remain with undiminished force. Human laws are intended for the criminal, and their excellence consists not in the sanguinary nature of their penalties, but in the nice adaptation of punishment, to the varying shades of crime; and in the uniform infliction of that punishment, when a conviction of criminality has been established: hence it follows, that the *milder* the code *can* be framed, consistently with the great interests of society, the more completely will it be calculated to obviate crime. There is however this grand difference between political laws, and parental discipline, that whereas the former do not contemplate *rewards* for good conduct, but consider such conduct, and the esteem which it ensures, as in itself a sufficient reward: domestic discipline has for its object the *recompense* of virtuous action, the formation of the character, the production of good habits, the development of amiable feelings, the substitution of correct motives, the consideration of intention and design, and the education of the several faculties of mind. And if mercy should temper justice in dealing with virtual crime, *à fortiori,* should pity, compassion, tenderness and forgiveness form the basis of good discipline. *Severity* then is entirely out of place; and while one instance of insubordination should never pass unnoticed, such notice should have for its object the *reformation,* rather than the *punishment* of the offender; the correction and the sub-

jugation of the evil tendency, and the growth and development of a principle of affection, to operate as a counter-agent to the evil, and to establish itself in its room.

How are these combined objects to be obtained without a sacrifice of either? Parental sorrow and displeasure should be observed as the *consequence* of every instance of filial insubordination; not always with the view of fixing the mind upon the crime or its punishment, but with the intention of producing repentance, and of shewing forgiveness of disposition; thus rivetting infallibly the affection of the child, and obviating the recurrence of disobedience, by the fear of grieving so kind a parent. Mere terror will be an inoperative principle, except in so far as it hardens the heart and leads to duplicity and concealment; but the fear of giving pain to a friend so dear, will exert an extensive influence over the mind; the happiness of the child will be increased, while its affection is kindled, rendered stronger, and more permanent.

In the arrangements of discipline, parents must avoid *austerity;* they are not to become unapproachable, inexorable judges, but should seek by all means the confidence of their offspring. The necessary influence of austerity, is to drive the meek and gentle spirit to the deepening shades of artifice; while the obstinate and the pertinacious throw off all kind of restraint, and openly contemn the maternal authority, or shelter themselves within the confines of despair, and a cer-

tain recklessness of feeling, which boots not what may be the consequence of its actions. Deceit and cunning on the one hand, and on the other perversity of continuance in evil, are the consequences of this most ill-judged *manifestation* of *authority;* for this is the common ground on which it is maintained, and on which *unsubdued temper* is too frequently allowed to dominate. Thus the evil is increased instead of being diminished; and the timid and the weak may be led to conceal impropriety of conduct, and to hide speciously the existence of bad disposition; while neither the one nor the other will be corrected or subdued. That which alienates the child from the confidence of its parent, which inspires it with a dread of her scrutiny, instead of with the uniform desire of openness, may indeed drive it to seek the shelter of impunity, but will never lead it to repentance and reformation; while the *feeble display* of *authority and its symbols,* but in reality *the strong arm of affectionate sorrow,* and the manifestation of a readiness to forgive, and an anxiety for reconciliation and restoration to favour, will scarcely fail to melt the stoutest heart, (and this is the only basis on which we *can* expect, or ought to *hope* for success) and allow it to take the form of that mould, which parental solicitude has prepared. Forgiveness will merit confidence, and the child will be thus led to confess willingly and candidly, faults which otherwise perhaps, would have lurked unseen: and thus it will serve to enlarge the sphere of mater-

nal knowledge, and her consequent power of exerting successful discipline.

Is it possible that this advantage can be overlooked, or not duly appreciated? It is possible, and not only possible, but actually is frequently, knowingly, and willingly thrown away, under the mistaken apprehension, that it derogates from the dignity of parental authority to encourage freedom of access, and filial confidence. And yet there is not one fault the more *because* each one is confessed, although more may be discovered, and the means of prevention may be devised; but in the one case, from being known, an opportunity is afforded for their correction; while in the other, they prey upon, undermine, or destroy the mental system.

CHAP. XIII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

In regulating the exercise of *discipline*, it is of the first consequence to ascertain not only the *general* character of the child, but also the weight and proportion of each individual trait, as compared with the *specific* influence, which it ought to exert in a well regulated mind, and as contrasted with other features of the character. The *same* kind and degree of discipline will not be suitable to the harsh natured individual, the form of whose mental manifestations is diversified by many inequalities, and even asperities, and obscured by much that is useless and injurious; the quality of whose mental soil renders it vigorous in its productions, although those productions are not always of sterling value; whose prominent characteristic it is to be possessed of strong passions, and to be mutually influenced by them, however much such influence may have been softened and disarmed of its frightful tendency, by the counterpoise of many amiable dispositions: *it cannot be that the same species of discipline* is required for the character in which obstinacy prevails, in whom the unyielding soil

refuses the impression of the gentler hand of cultivation, where every valuable property is concealed beneath a covering of perversity which must be broken up before its hidden treasures can be manifested; and, on the other hand, for a mental soil which is soft and yielding, easily susceptible of impression, readily assuming the mould of education, but not possessing sufficient stability to enable it to preserve that form; this constituting the versatile individual, accommodating itself to every change of circumstance, readily adopting the form with which the interest, or the prejudice, or the design of its companions may surround it; a greedy and unconscious imitator, with a great degree of carelessness as to the qualities of the object presented for imitation; too volatile to be tenacious of evil purpose; too subjected to change to be relied upon for the perseverance of good action, and the steady influence of good principle; intemperately excited by slight causes, and acting so much on the impulse of the moment and on the spur of occasion, as not to give time for the deliberation of judgment; too feeble to become a great, too liable to surprise from sudden emotion, to form a consistent character; too readily swayed from its purpose to be benevolent; too easily guided and governed by the example or the authority of others to be *just*, in a world in which this latter attribute can never exist, except in combination with a certain fearlessness of consequences, which is only to be found in those who can steadily and deliberately prefer the pursuit of virtue to that of interest.

The success of the parent will then mainly depend on the nice adaptation and influence of a well regulated *discipline!* We should smile at the narrow policy of the practical agriculturist, who should apply the same mode of culture to every variety of soil; and who, despising the evidence of experience, and making light of the knowledge to be obtained by chemical analysis, should torture every variety of earthly structure into submission to his own stupid system; a system for which he has not an excuse to plead; and for which, there is only this to be said in palliation, that it *may perchance be right;* and that if wrong, of which there exists the very highest probability, he will injure none but himself, and will reap the punishment due to his wilfulness and folly. But the prudent cultivator, before he adopts a system of management, will first survey every allotment of the ground on which his future energies are to be employed; he will ascertain the kind of grain to which it is best adapted, and the variety of manure which it may require, together with all the little circumstances of extension and improvement, so manifestly connected with the diversified appearance of the surface of our globe. So also the practical botanist, according to the given nature of the soil, knows the particular plants he may expect to meet with, because experience has taught him the wise ordination of nature, that certain of her productions should flourish only in a peculiar mould.

If such be the convictions of the agriculturist and the botanist, shall the mental cultivator—

shall the parent act less judiciously? Shall she not survey the ground on which she has to operate? Shall she not estimate its peculiarities, become acquainted with its natural productions, and thus form a judgment of those fruits which will flourish best, as well as of the mode of culture best calculated to ensure a plentiful return of the most diversified, and most valued productions? For, with regard to intellectual chemistry, it is certain that similar, or at least analogous states will be found, with those natural changes which have been just alluded to; and it is preposterous to suppose, that the same methods will answer equally well in the *discipline* required by the several diversities of character comprehended under the *general* distinctions enumerated above: it must be suited to the change of temper and disposition; for as the fertility of a soil depends upon the due admixture and properties of the particular earths of which it is composed; so does the value of the mind result from its peculiar manifestations: while the office of discipline is to encourage or counteract them as may be necessary, to cherish the feeble, afford the appropriate food for those which need to be nourished and supported, and counteract those which should be repressed.

And since a similar observation is applicable to every possible variety of human character, *discipline*, though agreeing in its general form, should be suited in its particular application to the specific attributes of each. Hence the necessity of becoming acquainted, not only with the *general*

form of each mental soil, but also with an analysis of its interior structure; not only of attending to its broad and defined outlines, those which constitute its generic properties, but to the specific operation of every individual principle and passion upon these; not of directing the inquiry to one predominant or striking feature, but to each secret motive which may influence the conduct; not to be satisfied with the common appearance, the outward semblance of action, when every thing occurs which is pleasing, in the halcyon days of prosperity, when perfect peace surrounds, when no adverse gale disturbs the summer evening's calm, but *also*, when it is agitated by conflicting passions, which invade its repose before it is aware of such agency. Hence also the necessity for attending to the temper and its various modifications; to the disposition under every variety of combination, to the agency of the passions, the dominion of affection, the power of habit, the effect of association, and the immediate and remote consequences of some favourite pursuit, as well as of the laws of society, and all else, which may change or modify the manifestations of mind. It is impossible here to act by rule, for although without this process, discipline will be unavailing to the individual, because inappropriate; yet having founded a system on general conclusions, its application will still depend on contingent circumstances; and indeed the treatment of each child will require a system of its own, and often of a very opposite character in the same little circle; for as in the human coun-

tenance, however strong may be the family likeness, there are always distinctive peculiarities; so with regard to the mental lineaments, however they may agree in general resemblance, there are still most important points of well-marked difference; and the *discipline* most accurately adapted to one, will be most prejudicial to another, and perfectly thrown away and inert upon a third. Thus for example, to recur to the illustration we have already employed, the discipline required by the strong and the obstinate, must be relaxed towards the meek and the feeble, whom it would infallibly destroy: the former requires the concentrated energy of the most powerful means; while the latter demands the gentler hand of parental encouragement, compassionate tenderness for its wanderings, assistance in its little difficulties, the cheering smile of approbation, the delicate affection of her whose love is only equalled and surpassed by Him who was God as well as man. For the *former*, the accents of displeasure will often be required, and still more frequently, the painful toil to convince, and to impress, to soften the stubborn heart, and to submit its proud risings to the authority of reason, parental duty, and christian precept.

Here then is to be avoided the danger of expending a greater share of attention upon the soft and amiable child, than upon another who is possessed of less pleasing qualities, and who does not offer a promise of repaying quickly the labour of cultivation. But this is unjust; since none

can say, that under nature's most rugged forms, she does not conceal a mine of inexhaustible worth, and which requires only the labour of working to make it productive of abundant returns; the diamond is not discovered till after the operation of washing it out from the refuse materials, with which it stands connected, and until it has received the polish of the lapidary. And thus *all*, even the most unlikely, will repay the toil of discipline; and all must be equally attended to. And as an additional stimulus and incentive to this impartiality of conduct, it should be recollected, that the yielding and impressible character, though it may promise a present reward for exertion, and that without much trouble, may yet conceal a shallowness and poverty, in which the fruits of our labour are liable to be destroyed by want of perseverance, or by the irruption of passion, or by the more insidious influence of temptation; and that from its extreme ductility it is liable to be drawn out into other forms, besides that which parental exertion would impress. There is also constant danger lest the goodly *products* which *flourish* under our unremitting care, should, when deprived of this support, wither and decay, because the soil does not retain the means of nourishing its own productions in their independent existence; and moreover, there is great reason to fear the prevalence of an universally accommodating spirit, which would become all things to all men, not in the spirit of the apostle, that he might by all means save some;

but in order to conciliate the good opinion of all, and escape the obloquy of daring to be singular in virtue, in the midst of surrounding vice and folly; as well as to avoid the odium which attaches to the simple followers of Him who was despised and rejected of men, whom the world hated, and whose disciples it will always hate, because *their* obedience to *his laws* must be a constant censure upon its motives and its practice. And on the contrary, if sufficient pains be taken with the less promising character, it will often be found to conceal great fertility and strength; steady sterling worth may be educed, and although its unyielding obstinacy may be considerable, yet even this may arise, not so much from a pugnacious disposition, as from a degree of pertinacity, which is really the expression of principled adherence of purpose, and which only requires to be led to its proper object in order to produce luxuriant fertility.

In furtherance of the views of *discipline*, the influence of a religious education will be particularly remarkable, since religion does not so much *communicate* faculties and affections, as give a new direction to those which are already possessed; moderating and directing their manifestations, and impressing on all *its* peculiar image. That which was false and factitious; the appearance of benevolence, and purity of action, which before proceeded from sordid and unworthy motives, is now real, extensive in its application, and energetic in its purpose; while those passions which

were acting in hostility to the influence of divine truth are now converted into its firmest buttresses, and that because they have themselves received a new object; and being trained to its pursuit, are become unwittingly, but necessarily and decidedly hostile to those objects for the attainment of which, they have before sacrificed so much liberty of action, freedom of choice—peace of mind, purity of motive, a quiet conscience, the happiness of time, the hope of heaven, all that is great, and good, and valuable.

Discipline is not to be relaxed for the sake of avoiding every disturbance of the child's enjoyment. Man, in his progress through life, must meet with trials and difficulties, arising out of his situation in society, and from his being placed here in a state of probation; and the sooner he is assailed by the beginnings of these difficulties, the better will he be prepared to meet them, the more advanced will he be in his onward journey through life, ere he is called upon for the mightier efforts of fortitude, and strength, and submission, and self-denial, and acquiescence. But it may be said, *if such be the case*, and it is readily allowed that man *is* born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards, why *prematurely disturb the unruffled days of infancy*, now that its tender mind is so little capable of supporting its diminutive cares and uneasiness, and when therefore, the parent should do all in her power, to render the period of childhood *happy*, instead of accumulating its anxieties? The voice of natural

affection, and of weak-mindedness, may claim this as a correct line of conduct, but what is the report of cool and sober *reason*, what is the award of *unbiassed judgment*—what say the precepts of our pure and *holy religion*? *Where* then are these peaceful hours of unruffled calm? *Where* is the nursery undisturbed by the tempest of passion? *Where* is this freedom from unhallowed desire, from selfishness, and avarice? *Where* is the sacred spot into which anger, and hatred, malice and envy, ambition and injustice, impatience and jealousy do not enter? And *if* there be no such hallowed regions, *where* then is to be found the peace, which discipline will destroy? So far from it, that it will really *increase* the present happiness of the child, because it circumscribes its wants, and regulates its desires within those moderate bounds, which constitute the very essence of present felicity; "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." Proverbs xxx. 8, 9.

Suppose discipline, which implies a moderate but unrelaxing restraint upon the passions, and temper and conduct be neglected; *suppose* that the whims of infancy be uncontrouled and all its waywardness indulged; *suppose* that its desires be not contradicted, nor its faults corrected; *suppose* that its humours and its caprice be not only tolerated but uniformly gratified; or *suppose* that

they experience only occasional and uncertain opposition, which is at all times worse than useless, what must positively be the consequence, the inevitable result? The number of supposed wants is increased; new and capricious desires are daily created and encouraged; pleasure itself is rendered insipid by its uniformity; listlessness and dissatisfaction cloud the brow; selfishness contracts the forehead, and shrivels the germ of benevolence; and the little subjects of this undisciplined, undiscriminating indulgence are actually more unhappy than those who are exposed to the influence of a want of affection, and positive unkindness from their parents; à fortiori, how wretched must they be, compared with those who live under a system of *well ordered discipline*, founded on intense affection, and guided by the purest motives! While the former are always preserved from contradiction, their wishes always gratified, every want however ridiculous supplied and even anticipated, how will they be prepared for their struggle through life; how will they be fitted to support the contradiction, the opposition, the disappointments, the vexations, the conflicting elements of society, the cold neglect of friends or patrons, the jealousy and unfairness of competitors, the ingratitude of inferiors, and all the various "whips and scorns of time," which they must experience in their commerce with the world?

Thus far reason and policy. But what says religion, and what will be the effect of this un-

discriminating affection on the future happiness of our offspring, not only *here*, where it will be decidedly injurious, but also *hereafter?* It will unfit the mind for religious instruction; render it averse from its truths, and place it in continual opposition to the parent, when she wishes to reduce the principles of the Bible to consistent practice in the daily conduct of life; and thus will it form an important obstacle to the influence of the Spirit, in producing that change of heart, without which virtue is a phantom, and religion but a name! Let these effects be traced upon the mind, from the pen of an inspired writer.—"Whoso loveth instruction, loveth knowledge; but he that *hateth reproof*, is brutish." Prov. xii. 1. "Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction; but he that regardeth reproof, shall be honoured." Prov. xiii. 18.—"Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way; and he that hateth reproof shall die." Ibid, xv. 10.—"He that refuseth instruction, despiseth his own soul; but he that heareth reproof, getteth understanding." Ibid, xv. 32.—"A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool." Ibid, xvii. 10.—"Chasten thy son while there is hope." Ibid, xix. 18.—"Even a child is known by *his doings*, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." Ibid, xx. 11.—"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Ibid, xxii. 15.—"He that hath no *rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and*

without walls." Ibid, xxv. 28.—" The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame." Ibid, xxix. 15.—" Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." Ibid, xxix. 17. If, then, the acquisition of knowledge be dependent upon discipline, and the absence of correction debase and brutify; if poverty, shame, and contempt await the froward and undisciplined, but honour attend the path of him who regardeth reproof; if discipline be painful only to him who is in error, and its absence lead to moral disease and death; if inattention to its rules be a proof of the light estimation of the immortal soul, while on the contrary true wisdom result from obedience to them; if discipline consist rather in reproof than in stripes; if it be to be adopted *early* while there is hope; if the character of childhood be fixed by its actions, and it be of importance that these be *pure* and right; if folly be the natural product of the human heart, and discipline be the appointed method of removing it; if the want of discipline conduct to lawlessness of desire, and he that hath no rule over his spirit is absolutely defenceless and destitute; if it lead to the absence of piety, and tend towards shame, a shame which recoils upon maternal neglect; and if, on the contrary, well ordered, mild, but firm discipline will ensure maternal peace, yea more, will give delight unto her soul; why then surely the voice of religion does but reverberate with tenfold energy the echo of reason and policy; and

we conclude that those parents who undervalue discipline, must be too weak to estimate its importance, or too wicked to act up to their convictions, or too weak and wicked to be convinced.

Discipline embraces farther an early and habitual, mild but not severe, judicious and uniform restraint on the passions; and when it is recollected how fearfully their disturbing agency actuates and controuls the man, and hurries him into all manner of evil, it will be seen how important is its agency in the formation of the future character; securing its happiness, and establishing its principles. While governed by affection, and guarded by religion, *discipline* can neither be adopted *too early*, nor persisted in with a too great constancy and energy of perseverance; at the same time it must be remarked, that it should be suited in its kind and degree to the age and advantages, talents and acquirements of the infant. In all cases, however, the child should be early accustomed to regulate its own actions by certain fixed principles; to moderate and repress its desires; to submit to privations; to curb its inclinations; to yield its wishes; to practise self-denial, and to govern its conduct by the unerring light of divine truth.

Under all circumstances, *discipline* should instruct the young into a *distrust of their own judgment*, and this will be accomplished by shewing their weakness and inefficiency, their proneness to error, and the necessity for constant circumspection, lest they should be influenced by un-

sound motives, or unworthy principles. This lesson is of great importance in a world of sorrow and contradiction, in order that we may learn not to murmur at, or to be angry with those who question our opinion, distrust our judgment, impugn our motives, or calumniate our designs; or who differ from, and expostulate with us: and that we may be early accustomed to bear opposition to our views, and feelings, and wishes, and favourite schemes. This is a lesson which *must* eventually be rendered familiar by intercourse with the world; and therefore one which it is desirable to possess before we are called upon to buffet with the waves of adversity, or placed in contact with those whose superior intelligence makes us *feel* our inferiority; that we may not have to learn a lesson of diffidence from dearly bought and humiliating experience.

Again, discipline may be so employed as to educe a spirit of forbearance, so essential, so indispensable to present comfort. Where this is wanting there will be a perpetual struggle between pride and mortification: life will consist in an uninterrupted series of captious efforts; there will be a constant endeavour to pursue one favourite plan, without regard to the feelings of others, without yielding to the consideration of their wishes, or throwing the veil of benevolence over their frailties. Without a spirit of yielding and forbearance, there will be no improvement, or delight in the blessings of life; there will be no prudent, consistent, christian conduct under its trials;

there will be no possibility of evincing the lowliness of real religion, or of coming to Christ with all our weariness, and all our burdens, and all our sins and infirmities, that *he* may give us *rest*, the rest of reconciliation with God, the peace of acquiescence in his will, of doing and suffering cheerfully all that he has appointed.

There is indeed great difficulty in bearing to be *thought wrong*, when conscious of being right; and to be anxiously and uniformly aspiring to do well, although we may not always obtain the praise of sincere design; although our well-doing may be evil spoken of; although we may be misunderstood, and misrepresented, and even calumniated.

By means of discipline, an opportunity is afforded of attending not so much to the action itself as to the motive which gave it rise, and the general spirit with which it is most intimately blended. The *act* may have been influenced by a thousand contingencies; it is the *heart* which requires examination, as the seat and source of motive and feeling, principle and conduct.

Neither should the event of actions be suffered to influence the judgment either of the parent or of the young. Too frequently in the management of discipline, the *former* will act under the impulse of some unfortunate consequence, the effect of accident, and *yet act* as if it were the result of evil will. *Principle, design,* and *intention,* should be the great objects for parental discipline, as they are for the *child,* and indeed

for *both*, the only sure grounds of *right practice;* and the mind should be carefully guarded against the indulgence of solicitude after the praise of others, a praise which attaches itself more to appearance than realities, to *success* rather than *desert*. With the world, success is the criterion of merit; a most erroneous idea, and one which the parent will most carefully oppose. Were it once indulged, it would soon develop pride in those talents which are the instruments of success: whereas it should be most uniformly proved, that these talents are the gift of God, committed to their care as stewards, and that so far from any merit attaching to their exertion or its consequences, it is a *bare act of duty*, which involves a higher responsibility on our parts; that we shall be one day called to give an account of our stewardship, and then it will be found that at the very best we have been unprofitable servants.

By means of *discipline* also, may be taught a spirit of gentleness, meekness, and patience under the trials of life. Thus does it present a wide field for the exertions of the parent: *all* her hopes may not be fulfilled: she may even be disappointed in her prospect of success; but so far from being discouraged by the failure of to-day, she must be excited to renewed efforts for to-morrow; and thus obtain energy even from disappointment, for although "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," yet, "when the desire cometh it is a tree of life." Want of success must afford no motive for a relaxation of duty;

but it *does give* substantial ground, for redoubling her assiduity, for questioning the accuracy of her proceedings, for examining the validity of her plans; for inquiring into her own heart, and ascertaining if no secret bias may have taken away her dependence on almighty aid, and if she may not have been trusting to herself; and it does give substantial ground for testing the practice by which her principles may have been followed, and for determining if these do not admit of improvement; for distrusting their correctness, and anxiously seeking that her own heart should be right with God.

Some parents do *too much*, and make their children hypocrites: the majority do *too little*, because they are not deeply and thoroughly convinced of the importance of discipline, and because they rest in the exertion of their own strength. But in dependence upon divine aid, let the mother continue her own *assisted* efforts, and much, very much will be accomplished; though as has been before stated, the renewal of the heart is not the work of education, and can alone be effected by the operation of the Spirit of divine grace.

There are, however, one or two cautions on the subject of discipline which we cannot altogether pass over, and with which the present chapter will be closed. The necessity for its *undeviating uniformity* has been pleaded for in the foregoing pages, and it is by no means here intended to relax this direction: but it must be recollected,

that the characteristics of good discipline are that it be mild and principled. If it should assume the form of severity; above all, if it should be capricious, or attach itself to little apparent details or points of action, rather than to the spirit of the act, then is it most frequently unjust; it exerts a teazing influence upon the mind; it attaches blame where no fault really exists, and where the design was excellent: this misconstruction produces irritability, irritability treads closely on the heels of anger, and is followed by a loss of confidence and affection towards the parent, and an indisposedness to listen to her advice. Ye "fathers *provoke* not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged," (Colossians, iii. 21,) are the important words of an inspired writer, and should form a land-mark for the exertion of discipline. It must subdue, not irritate; its demands and its exertions must be neither frivolous nor vexatious; its views must be enlarged; itself must rise above the littlenesses of feeling; and then it will seldom err in carrying its all pervading agency, throughout the entire system of parental conduct: ubiquity must be its unfailing property, and yet it must operate unseen; it must be as the nervous influence to the body, indispensable to the performance of every one of its functions, and to the health of the whole, but impossible to be detected. The remaining clause of the above cited passage, viz. "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," will shew what are the real objects

of discipline, and what is the true meaning of the antithesis, by which the wrath of childhood is placed in opposition with the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

But lastly, it may become a question, whether *it is, or is not* desirable to keep the faults of children constantly before their eyes; or whether by doing thus, they will not become so habituated to that which is wrong, as almost to *cease* to account it such, and to confound the distinctions between good and evil. This question does not admit of a simple negative or affirmative reply, because a distinction must be made between errors, faults, and vices.

The just and holy God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and the maternal conduct is here defined by that of our heavenly Father. A wilful act of criminality must be never passed unnoticed; nor even *that*, which though not in itself criminal, leads immediately to the commission and indulgence of crime. But with regard to the more venial faults and errors, the evils of thoughtlessness and inconsideration, and many of the little daily and hourly proofs of imperfection, of which the frequency of their recurrence would necessitate the almost constant *ostensible* operation of discipline; and when the parent would be thus pitted against the child many times in every hour of the day; here indeed, without relaxing the system of discipline, it is not to be made a prominent feature of action, since the frequency of rebuke will diminish the intensity of its impres-

sion; the child will become reckless of its influence, and ceasing both to love and to fear its parent, it will give up the effort to please; its little heart will be hardened; and he that being often reproved, hardeneth his heart, is in the worst possible situation for future improvement. It is a mistaken idea, that discipline consists only in rebuke and correction: as in the instance we are now considering, its plain and obvious duty is not to familiarize the mind with reproof, as the punishment of error, and which the child will soon come to consider in the light of an atonement for it; *but* perceiving the *weak points* of the character, to educate, to foster, to encourage, to develop, and strengthen the counter principles, which by their preponderance will slowly and ultimately subdue the morbid tendency. The consequence of very frequent rebuke is to cause the young lightly to esteem the expression of parental discipline, as well as the fault which may have called it forth; evils which it is self-evident, lead at once, to the subversion of the great barriers to impropriety, as well as of the basis on which correct views and practice are established; while by the indirect, but more certain operation of bringing out into prominence, a counter-principle, the mind is strengthened in the pursuit of good, and its tendency to error, is gradually subverted.

CHAP. XIV.

ON THE FORMATION OF HABITS.

THE power and influence of habit, as a physical agent, have been already considered; (see vol. I. chap. i. p. 10.) but its operation on morals requires in this place some little development. "Train up a child in the way in which he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it," are the words of infinite wisdom, and demonstrate the power of habit over the human mind; and declare, that good principles wrought out into habitual action, will not lose their influence; but that they will maintain and exert their power of perpetual recurrence, notwithstanding all the follies of youth, the vanities of the world, the temptations of sense, the errors of mature life, the crimes of society, the alienation from God, the substitution of this or that idol, the power of an accumulated series of deviations from the path of rectitude—every effort to silence conscience, to stifle remorse, to weave still closer the web of iniquity, to consummate the departure from true wisdom by the entire forgetfulness of God, to shut the eyes against the repeated warnings of providence, to close the ear

against the renewed invitations of grace, aye, even in spite of the barrier to truth opposed by age, by a long course of iniquity, declining strength, enfeebled mind, advancing decrepitude, approaching dissolution ; in spite of all these circumstances, the power of early habit, will still recall the mind to the religious *principle*, upon which it was first formed ; will still form a centre of hope, from which even at the last hour, may originate the cry of mercy to the only Saviour, the heartfelt dying prayer, "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom," and to which may reach the animating assurance, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." And if this be true of the extreme case we have supposed ; if even *one may* be saved at the very last hour, surely *none* need cast away hope ; surely *it* would be sufficient inducement to implant the principle, and educe the habit, with the hope, the chance, the bare possibility, that this *might* only in *one* case prove the means of salvation.

But the argument is stronger ; for if in this case there be hope ; and if (as is really the fact) the power of good habit be enfeebled, and rendered almost nothing by the constant iteration of bad conduct, the eternal vibrations of evil principle ; we shall see that the hope of good increases in proportion as we trace back our way from extreme old age to middle life, and even to youth ; and that that which is possible in decrepitude with all its accumulated load of departure

from God, becomes more and more probable in earlier life, till it has assumed the shape, and claimed to itself the attributes of a distinct and tangible expectation. Hence the importance of this subject, and the claim which it presents to practical attention.

Habitual moral action is grounded on *theory*, and that theory is based on the knowledge of certain and sufficient facts, together with their principles and consequences ; and the accordance of the latter with the inspired truths of revelation. It must be obvious however, that *habitual moral action* may be founded on reason, theory, principle, and consequences, irrespective of revealed religion ; and that the *latter* will be found to influence principally and wholly, the minds of those who are taught by the Spirit of God. We are then by no means to reject *every habit*, which does not own the Word of God for its rule and its guide ; but as parents, anxious for the best interests of children, our *aim* must always be to engraft habit on the exertion of principle, principle on sound reason, and reason on the Word of God.

When the individual is not thus influenced by divine grace ; and when any principle, or assumed principle, has been acted upon, without producing immediately bad consequences, however injurious may be its real tendency ; yet the mind is too apt to look no further, but the questionable action will establish itself as a rule, will become the criterion of future conduct, and by

repeated association, will be invested with the power and properties of habit. Hence, the primary importance of considering *action*, as the expression of a certain state of mind, which *itself* will serve to establish and confirm. And since the mere light of human reason is insufficient to conduct the man into the paths of rectitude, preserve him under the influence of virtue, and save him from the contagion of vice; so does it become the christian mother to seek a higher source of last and definite appeal, to draw her motives from the Word of God, and to instil the principles of the Gospel in their unsullied purity, as the only proper basis for future exertion.

The resources of an infant's mind are as yet undeveloped; it is a stock, which in future years will produce fruit according to the scion which may be engrafted on it. It is simply the *foundation* of a noble edifice; and the object of the parent is to erect upon it, not a castle of indolence, not a mansion of luxury, not a lazar-house for the reception of all the infirmities and diseases of our moral nature; not a temporary building however splendid, for the transaction of commercial business,—no, nor even a magnificent intellectual storehouse: but *a temple of the living God;* "for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." 1 Corinthians vi. 20. Around this foundation lay a vast number of materials fitted for the several compartments of the intended edifice; these are at present disconnected

with it, and have been thrown into disorder and confusion, by some disturbing agent, whose power has even gone so far as to destroy the original cohesion of some of its most polished corner stones; and all have now been thrown together, not only without order and method and arrangement, but in studied, and as it should seem at first sight, in inextricable perplexity. Some of these abundant materials are yet well suited for their intended purpose; while others would not only detract from the beauty of the building, but would endanger its safety and permanence; hence the great importance of not employing indiscriminately the materials placed within our reach, nor even of choosing at random; but of selecting from the heap, according to some fixed principle, those only, which will communicate beauty and stability; and of rejecting those which would impair either the one or the other. The *rule* to guide this choice, *is the Word of God*, and "let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it." 1 Corinthians iii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Hence the infinite moment of the formation of early habits, founded on christian principles; and of their association into character.

Having established on this subject the grounds

of parental duty, we are now prepared to remark that the grand indications for maternal exertion, are, to form habits which will be useful and proper; and to restrain or correct those which are questionable or improper. To prevent the formation of evil habits, it is of the first consequence to obviate the *so frequent* repetition of improper action, as that it should assume the form, and be invested with the power of custom. When any line of conduct *has become* habitual, it is very difficult to establish a dissimilar train of thought, and reasoning, and action, since it requires the affections to be interested in this pursuit, and *these* are already enlisted under the banner of the enemy; but *before this period has arrived,* the formation of the habit may be prevented, by attending closely to the first rudiments and springs of action, correcting these, and preventing their being improperly biassed. And here it must be remembered, that the influence of conduct, extends far beyond its apparent origin and termination; for as the human mind is constituted, neither action nor passion can remain in an insulated form, but stand connected with a train of consequences of a similar complexion; so that the indulgence of one habitual error, will lead to the development of many more, and will conduct its infatuated votary into all the intricacies of midnight atheism, from which the sun of the Christian's heaven has been blotted out, and there remains not one cheering ray of hope and of deliverance.

The principal means of fulfilling these indications are to encourage and cultivate those ideas, principles, affections, and passions, which are conducive to the support of that action which it is wished to render *habitual;* to lead the mind to practise it constantly; above all to fix its attention upon the grounds of its own action; and to shew that these are derived from the revealed will of God, and are exerted in obedience to his commands. The *mode* of conveying this instruction, is, not so much by a direct and exclusive appeal to the understanding, as by interesting the heart, in the great motives of Christianity; and the power of these being once established, the aid of intellectual support will necessarily follow in their train. There is a frequent source of error, and of failure, in considering children merely as intelligent, and not also as sentient beings; and thus the parent may be too much occupied with the understanding, and address herself too exclusively to the reasoning principle, to the neglect of the imagination and the passions, the hopes, the fears, the anticipations of hereafter.

This view of the subject should influence the parent's *choice of motives* for action; *thus,* for instance, the duty of making the divine will, the rule of our conduct, will be more effectually taught, by shewing the goodness, mercy, and love of God, towards sinful, ruined, lost, and helpless man, than it can be by any arguments of moral philosophy, or propriety, or aught else which is

the mere production of reason. In conclusion, let the parent be ever on the watch, to *establish and fix* as a governing principle, any *one* action, which proceeds from right motives, however these may have been *occasional*, and excited only by the peculiar circumstances of situation; for by taking advantage of these golden opportunities, it will often happen, that that action, which has originated under the impulse of correct *feeling*, may become a pervading habit of the mind, and may be rendered the instrument of much good. *Apparent accident* has been the frequent source of useful discovery; but in education, there should be nothing left to *accident;* yet unexpected events, if diligently embraced, will often conduct the parental instructress to the confirmation of good, and the subversion of bad habits.

CHAP. XV.

OF THE PASSIONS.

SECTION I. *Of Selfishness.*

SELFISHNESS consists in the preference of personal and individual *interest*, and in the abandonment of attention to the wants and feelings of others. Its first influence is to confine the views within the narrow limits of self-gratification—that reigning principle of action in all the different ages of life, from the cradle to the grave. Its agency is prominently marked so soon as desire can be developed; it is the natural effort of the human heart, till controuled by other principles; and although it may be more effectually concealed during the mid-day of existence, by a refinement of self-interest, assuming the form of dissimulation, and stimulated by the fear and the shame of being thought selfish; yet even here, the finer shades of this character may be traced by an unprejudiced observer; and towards the evening of life, it will again stalk abroad in lengthened outline, and will hover, with augmented power, around the twilight of decrepitude, and cling fondly to the last wasting remnants of vitality, until "man goeth to his long home."

Selfishness is an *absorbing* passion; it never rests satisfied with any preceding advantage: before it, policy, expediency, principle, virtue, motive, religion, the love and the fear of God, and the desire of obedience to his will, all yield their peculiar prerogatives, and bow to its extensive sway; the kindlier affections are kept in check, and exclusive inclination, egoistic passion, and narrow disposition, reign uncontrouled, disseminating unhappiness, and obliterating all traces of benevolence.

The passions will generally be found *virtues or vices,* according to the use which may be made of them. Thus selfishness is a virtue within just bounds, and originates in the principle of self-conservation; that which was given us for the purpose of preserving the individual, of ensuring a proper attention to the health, and enforcing the desire after the continuance of life; a desire, which however it may be subordinated to the will of God, ought never to be superseded; for though to die were infinite gain, yet to *live* to the glory of God, and for the good of others, should be the Christian's hope. This passion has however been depraved by the *fall;* it is no longer marked as a principle of self-preservation; but assumes the distinct form of a desire to accumulate as much gratification as possible around the individual, without regard to the feelings and good of others: it seeks the extension of life, only because it affords the means of augmented and reiterated

enjoyment; it *lives* within itself; it seeks not the happiness of others; it recks not obedience to the will of heaven; it is unjust and anti-social in all its tendencies, and renders man—rational, intelligent man—man who was created in the image of God—the debased slave of his organization and appetites. Melancholy portrait! Yet such is a faithful representation of the natural heart of man; he lives to himself; he acts, and thinks, and speaks, and feels for himself; and, awful thought! with no better principle than this, he dieth to *himself*, and will then live through all eternity, a prey, and a misery to *himself!!*

If we examine the first actions, and mental workings of infancy, we shall find that the child pursues selfish gratification without any other consideration; and no sooner is an effort made to oppose this unvarying pursuit, than anger and other hateful passions are excited; all demonstrating, if such demonstration were thus necessary, that some devastating change has passed upon the fairest work of Omnipotence; and shewing the tendency to evil, as well as proving that there is none that doeth good. But since self-denial, and forbearance towards others, are the only basis on which the happiness of society can be constituted, it is of consequence that the child be taught to exercise these principles; a lesson which must be commenced early, before the evil principle has gained strength by exercise, and has ripened into habit; and the acquisition of which, though necessarily painful, will not only

add greatly to the value and influence of the character, but will also be a comfort through life, and lead the individual to place its best hopes on futurity.

The subjection of selfishness, the government of self, includes the suppression of improper passions, the submission of our wishes and desires to secure the comfort of others, the sacrifice of present pleasure to promote another's welfare, the subjection of improper motives to action, and the encouragement of those which are just, and which will lead us with pleasing reflections through the most difficult circumstances of life. There are certain and defined limits placed to the gratification of our *wishes;* and the young should be early taught to act upon them: as for instance, are they lawful in kind and in degree? Are they openly sanctioned by, and in strict conformity with the will of God? Are they reasonable, and in accordance with the wants, and hopes, and fears of an intelligent being? Are they expedient, or suited to the circumstances and situation of social, relative man? Are they worthy of an aspirant after immortality, one whose transient period of earthly existence is but as the vestibule which marks his entrance upon eternity; the mere line, which it requires scarcely a second of time, or the slightest effort to pass, and which once passed, is subject to no possibility of retrogradation? And finally, are they worthy of such a Being—destined to live for ever, and whose eternity of reward or punishment, will be fixed

according to the deeds done in the body, according to his reception of the offers of mercy, or his blind preference of selfish enjoyment, and wilful, obstinate rejection of the invitations of grace, and the admonitions of the Spirit?

In order to govern the heart, it must be known; the intricacies of its minuter shades of preference must be unravelled; the mind must have been accustomed to an analysis of its actions and motives; and to trace them through all their different gradations from the first germ of inclination, to the fully formed wish, the developed motive, the great desire, the vehement passion, the headlong and almost irresistible impulse, when the easily controuled inclination has been suffered to obtain such a degree of importance, by passing through the successive stages of selfish agency. Besides this minute inquiry into the principles of action, the government of self, presupposes a reference to some certain and fixed principle of action, some unerring standard, some immutable laws proceeding from the source of wisdom and of truth; and adapted to the feebleness and the necessity of man, who is prone to inconsistency and folly: and these laws are to be sought, and to be found only in the revealed will of heaven.

These principles, however, are possessed by a child in so slight a degree, that its government of itself must be in some measure empirical; that is, it must be taught to exert the consummation of the principle in self-controul, before it can fully appreciate all the intermediate chain of

causes and effects, which constitute the mature and well-regulated character. But under parental guidance, it will learn to a certain extent, to subdue and avert the risings of selfishness, without exactly being conscious of the grounds of such action. The parent, as the guide of her offspring, instils the principle, develops the act, and reiterates the motive and the duty, till by degrees they come to be intimately associated, and form essential points of uniform character.

Self-government is often required through life; not a day, not an hour, scarcely even a single instant, can pass away in the busy scenes of social intercourse, in the seclusion of domestic privacy, aye, and even in the solitude of complete abstraction, without the necessity for recurring to this principle. It is of the first consequence to sustain *equanimity;* but to sacrifice our own wishes to the views of others; to bear an insult unprovoked; to suffer the contumely of the wicked, and the neglect of the good; to be exposed to losses and affiictions; and to support the derision, the haughty scorn, the frown, and worse than all, the smiles and favour of the world, requires the controul of selfish inclination, the subduction of natural passion, and the exertion of superinduced principle.

The government of self, however, relates not only to the mode in which we receive, and are influenced by the actions of *others,* but to the manner in which our own actions are regulated; and farther still, to the choice and indulgence of mo-

tive in which these originate. Motives are influenced by the agency of depraved feelings and affections, as well as of distorted and perverted judgment: under the operation of passion, we are thrown off our guard, and are induced to speak unadvisedly, to think harshly, to act hastily, and often erroneously; selfish inclination governs the will, influences the affections, and chains the mind to one narrow limit; excluding the principles of benevolence, and forgetting those of the gospel; enslaving the man, and destroying his freeness and rectitude of action. By means of this subtle principle, *prejudice*, *bigotry*, and intolerance assail mankind; for each one of these may be directly traced to a preference of selfish inclination, superseding a benevolent tenderness and respect to the views and feelings of others; in fact, every want of liberality and kindness to those who entertain different opinions from our own, may be traced to a want of self-government, and to the concealed influence of selfish feeling and passion.

The agency of this principle is of the greatest importance in after life: and this depends mainly upon its due and regular exercise in infancy; or when self-controul is attempted, and the struggle is to be maintained with the combined power of the principle, and the habit, the chance of victory will be proportionally small. The parent therefore should curb and moderate the unruly passions and desires of the child; instruct it into what ought to be its motives to action, and en-

force them steadily and uniformly. Not only are selfish inclinations to be restrained, but actual self-denial is to be practised. If instead of the exercise of this pure principle, self-gratification be esteemed the great criterion of action, an unamiable character is produced; its conduct is wholly tinged with a melancholy stain that betrays the sad change which has been wrought upon the mind, so that individual interest becomes the groundwork of motive, instead of that willing cession of personal comfort to the good of others, which should form the basis of principled conduct.

Without this self-denial, where would be the peace and harmony of domestic life: there the abnegation of self forms the basis of happiness, of which the indulgence of a contrary motive saps the foundation: each one must prefer the comfort of others to his own, before he can exercise that forbearance, that tenderness and delicacy towards their feelings which are so essential, and without which, respect, esteem, affection, all will crumble away before the tyranny of that cruel monster, *self*.

Another mode of subduing selfishness, is by the exercise of that practical self-denial, which should form the basis of christian charity, that pure and holy principle, which consists not in the indulgence of ineffective good wishes, and in the enjoyment of the luxury of pity, or in the bustling activity of public subscription, or in the ostentatious bestowment of superfluities; but in the mite of the widow, the offering of self-denying

benevolence, the hardly-earned and difficultly spared contribution, which necessitates the abandonment of some promised pleasure, some favourite luxury, or even some *supposed necessary*, for the pure delight of securing the happiness or the good of others, cheering the bed of sickness, soothing the pillow of anguish, and administering to the necessities of the poor and the indigent, the sorrowing and the dying. That charity which will not seek the means for its support in self-denial *may* be very useful to those on whom it is expended, but it is utterly without a blessing to those who communicate; the disease of selfishness has destroyed its native character, and it is no longer *twice blessed*. The parent will always find the means of establishing this principle and practice, by producing occasions for charity, founded invariably on the basis of self-denial; and thus will be developed the principle and the habit of self-controul, while the power of benevolence will be heightened, and a more extensive sphere of usefulness will be obtained.

The principle of self-government may be still farther promoted, by abstaining from every good thing which cannot be procured without some degree of injustice, however slight, to others; or some shadow or semblance of impropriety. In either case, it will be an object of great importance to form moderate desires, such as will be easily and simply gratified, and which will not require any wasteful expenditure of sensorial energy, any relinquishment of duty, any aban-

donment of the good of others, any sacrifice of principle for its support.

Again, the practice of self-denial must be extended to things which are perfectly lawful, but which are not now expedient, from the circumstances in which we are placed with regard to others, or ourselves: interfering with the comfort of the former, or with our more important pursuits, or a just economy of time, or the regulation of personal expenditure. Thus, for instance, self-denial is required, as it may refer to the possession of some object good in itself, and affording the means of doing good, and being more extensively useful, *if*, in order to obtain it, we must withhold comfort from those to whom we could otherwise afford it; if it would render us unjust towards those to whom we are under pecuniary obligations; if it would induce us to steal time from other *duties*, in order to devote it to a fresh object of enjoyment; and more than all, if it should tempt us to sacrifice religious, moral, and intellectual advantage at the shrine of animal luxury.

Such is however the strength and intensity of the selfish principle, and such the power of its early and habitual exercise, that oral and preceptive instruction is not a sufficient antidote to its influence: argument alone is unavailing; the voice of reason is stifled by the impetus of passion; the sober apothegms of philosophy are forgotten; the sublimest system of ethics is neglected; the admonitions of conscience are op-

posed or perverted; the dictates of our holy religion are disregarded; the plain directions of the Bible, and the example of Christ are lightly esteemed, or avowedly set at nought; and the adoration of self is substituted for the worship of the Most High. But if such be the influence of uncontrouled passion, it is necessary to seek the means of applying constantly the antidote principle, as one for common, and constant, and daily, and hourly *use;* not as an object of belief, but of practice, that the foundations of self-denial and self-government may be deeply and securely laid, and may be formed into integral parts of the mental system; so that by their uniform and successive application, they may exist as so many points of reference hereafter, in all cases of emergency and difficulty.

This object is to be effected *generally* in every little act of kindness, and affection, and benevolence of children to each other; and in every labour of charity for the poor, the sick, and the destitute; but particularly may it be obtained by means of food, and dress, and medicine. These objects are probably very little attended to, because they appear trifling; but let it be remembered, that the ideas of children can only be formed and corrected by a review and comparison of circumstances, and events, and opportunities, with which they are surrounded, and which are familiar to their capacities: and hence it is that those things which strike the eye in common life,

appeal to the heart, and influence the understanding. Thus with regard to medicine, nothing can render its exhibition palatable; and it is absurd to endeavour to conquer the repugnance, the instinctive aversion of children from it, by cheating them into the belief that it is *very nice*, an assertion which they immediately learn to be false; and unfortunately learn more, viz. that that falsehood has been uttered by their parent, whom they consequently begin to disesteem, and to distrust—an evil of such incalculable magnitude, that it is only a matter of surprise, how any thinking parent can risk its occurrence. When medicine *is* necessary, let it be taken as an act of duty and of self-denial, for the purpose of restoring health; and let these principles be inculcated as the basis of the duty; so shall it teach the government and controul of selfish inclination. The *nature* and quantity of food, and the *mode* of dress, will also furnish useful methods of fulfilling this indication. If the child be permitted to reject plain and simple food, for that which is more piquant, and highly seasoned, or rendered stimulating by any other means, it is *effectually* taught self-indulgence and self-preference, however the *precepts* of moderation and self-controul may have been inculcated; whereas, if the opposite system be invariably adopted, it will learn to subordinate its wishes and appetites to the simple object before it, viz. that of conveying nourishment to the system.

So also, if the child be systematically taught to

dispense with some ornamental article of dress, or even, though not ornamental, superfluous, or one which would admit of a cheaper substitute, without forgetting the proprieties of station; for the purpose of procuring some lasting and more valuable possession, and, *à fortiori*, with the view of relieving the ignorance, or the vice, or the distresses of others, it will learn a lesson of self-government, which will exercise the principle, and diffuse its influence through the remainder of life; so true is it, that "there is that maketh himself poor; yet hath great riches." Proverbs xiii. 7. "Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house, and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermillion. Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and judgment, and then it was *well* with him? *He* judged the cause of the poor and needy; *then* it was well with him; was not this to know me, saith the Lord? But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence to do it." Jeremiah xxii. 13—17.

Section II.—*Of Anger—of Hatred—of Resentment—of Vengeance.*

a. Of Anger.

Anger is a restless passion:—"Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous." Proverbs xxvii. 4. It disturbs the equilibrium of the bodily functions, produces violent commotion in the digestive system, disorders the intellectual faculties, agitates the mind, and drives it from its centre of peace and hope; its turbulent waves break over the soul, overwhelm its recollection, subdue, and cause it to be carried away by its impulse; the government of self is entirely lost; the conduct it occasions is unjust; it is founded on *feeling*, and that, *sinful feeling*, instead of on *reason, and that reason guided by revelation*. If then its immediate influence upon the body, be to produce disease, to excite irritation of the brain, and unfit that organ for its peculiar and appropriate function, the manifestations of mind, and the acquisition and enlargement of intelligence: if it subvert the influence of good principle, and destroy the rest and peace of the Christian bosom; if he be driven by it from his dependence upon his faithful Protector; and if he suffer his confidence to be tossed on the surface of this stormy passion, and even to be lost in its mighty billows; if he lose the possession of himself, and be provoked to act towards others, as he would not wish to be acted by; and if for-

getful of the laws of God, he should allow himself to be guided by the blind impetus of wounded self-love, surely, can he be angry and sin not? can he be too soon, or too sedulously employed in counteracting this baneful tendency?

Anger is extensive in its influence, and mischievous in its consequences; it requires to be opposed in every form and degree, and demands unceasing watchfulness. It soon betrays its existence in the bosom of infancy, and concentrates upon itself much maternal management. "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger: and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." Proverbs xix. 11. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty." Proverbs xvi. 32. But the *discretion* of infancy is a principle in embryo; and although its development will form a part of christian education, yet it is not to be relied upon as a barrier to wrath, and the irascibility of the young is one of their earliest mental manifestations. *Their* anger is not deferred; neither is it slowly produced; for no sooner is the occasion presented, than this passion is excited, and *then*, "behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth;" affection and principle yield before the impetuous torrent, and during its continuance, the individual can no longer be considered as of sound mind, but as subjected to a paroxysm so nearly bordering on insanity, that it should excite in our minds, all the horror of that fearful malady, yet without an equal degree of commiseration for its victims; the difference consisting in this, that while the

one is a visitation of Providence, the other is a voluntary infliction. It must be recollected, however, that some children are much more prone to anger than others; and that this, so far as it consists in original predisposition, is the expression of peculiarity of physical temperament. But *when* this *is* the case, *there* is the greater need for that discretion which defers anger, and for that *slowness* to passion, which is an engine of so great power, in calming the irritated waves of a stormy ocean.

The predispositions to evil, form a source of our trial and temptation—of our victory or defeat: they are many of them dependent upon constitutional tendency, and they are pretty evenly distributed; so that individuals are generally characterized by their influence, and commonly possess an equal share of principles (though constantly varying in their complexion) which require encouragement, or demand opposition. None therefore need complain; and none need excuse themselves on the ground of *original bias;* for this forms a part of that system of probation in which we live; and man has been furnished with the power of choosing good, and opposing evil; and has received principles, which if he will but exercise them, will enable him to subdue the predisposition towards evil. And in addition to this, the word of unerring truth has been given him as a sure and certain guide to rectitude of principle, and uprightness of conduct; together with a promise that the grace of God shall be sufficient for

every emergency. And with such a provision of strength, and such kind assurances of support, there can be no ground for supineness in resisting anger, no excuse for readily admitting its incursions.

Anger usually arises in consequence of some supposed *positive* injury, or negatively from the consciousness, or even the suspicion, of a want of sufficient attention to our wishes and desires, or even our self-created necessities. It is very generally unjust; and depends on *our own* improper ideas of the magnitude of our wants, and of the right to expect immediate compliance with them. It is also associated with a group of malignant passions; and unless wrestled with, and successfully opposed, it will increase in its demands, it will come to be excited on the most trivial occasions, and it will disturb the social peace of all around, disorder the constitutional health, destroy the harmony of the paternal government, unfit the mind for serious study, sap the foundation of relative and kindred interest, blast the growth of the kindlier affections, break the laws of God, and assimilate man by his ferocity to the beasts which perish.

The returns of anger are to be prevented by shewing the injustice, impropriety, sinfulness, and evil consequences of the passion; by teaching the necessity of bearing with slight or supposed injuries; by enforcing the duty of frequently sacrificing our own ideal comfort to the real interests of others; by inculcating the advantage of considering the causes and grounds

of our anger, and inquiring *if we do well to be angry;* by exhibiting the attributes of that pure and holy Being, *before whom we are angry;* and finally by tracing the immediate and remote consequences of such displeasure. If the child can be taught to *pause and consider*, before it yields to the incursions of anger; if it can be made to look well to its ways, to weigh the causes of its passion against their consequences as a breach of social duty, and as an offence against God; if it can be taught to inquire first, if it has been *really injured*, or if it be only wounded pride, which prompts the feeling, whether the injury were adequate to the immediate disturbance of its own peace, and if it were not better to bear it with meekness and patience, than to add sin to suffering; if the importance of self-denial and the advantages of self-government be duly appreciated; if it can be taught to estimate its own feelings by the balance of reason, and gauge them by the Word of God; and to ascertain if it be reasonable, or prudent, or wise, or moral, or christian like, to deliver over the whole rational, intellectual, spiritual man to the ungoverned impulse of blind fury; if it can be taught to consider that the eye of Omniscience is upon its path, that it may in a moment (and not unfrequently in a moment of anger) be summoned before its judge, and to feel that it would not choose thus to appear before him, with all the faculties agitated by passion; if it can be made to acknowledge how offensive anger must

needs be to him who is all benevolence and love, and mercy, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and finally, if it can be taught the disorder which anger introduces into the spiritual manifestations —how it unfits the mind for sacred duty, dissociates it from the Saviour Christ, places it at the greatest possible distance from a resemblance to *him* who "answered nothing," and who directs his followers to turn the other cheek to him who smiteth on the one; then will a barrier be raised against anger, which will not easily be overborne.

Thus then do we find that humility, the forgiveness of injuries, patience, and submission are all antidotes to anger; and all these will be enforced by the consideration of the depraved condition of human nature, as the common cause of that state of mind and feeling, which gives origin, and force, and energy to the provocatives of anger; but this state of mind should claim our pity rather than our reprobation; so that we should be endeavouring to compassionate the wanderings of others, which would enable us to palliate and excuse rather than to resent their conduct, and not to return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. And as soon as the young can appreciate the motive, it should be taught the danger of anger, its heinousness and offensiveness in the sight of God, its tendency to enslave the heart, to call up passions which are decidedly opposed to obedience of that

law which requires that we should love God with all the heart, and with all the mind, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and thy neighbour as thyself; and that it leads directly to an infringement of that commandment which includes *all evil will,* under the simple terms, " thou shalt not kill."

b. Hatred.

Hatred results from the frequent employment of anger. It is impossible to be often angry with an individual, without feeling a diminution of benevolent disposition towards him. Though perhaps in the first place we may *excuse,* and *fancy we forgive* the fault which has occasioned anger, yet it will be too generally found, that there rankles in the mind, the germ of evil disposition; that we are less inclined to place a charitable construction, upon all the acts, and deeds, and feelings, and opinions of him who has offended us; that we are more disposed to be suspicious of his conduct, captious upon trifling occasions, and prone to the excitement of angry emotion upon slight causes. In proportion as anger is more frequently produced, these feelings predominate to a greater extent; and that which originates in the *absence* of benevolent agency, degenerates into positive coldness; all interest in the character is destroyed; coldness condenses into aversion, and finally expands into palpable *hatred,* an active principle, which now promi-

nently marks the feeling, is visible on the surface of the character, and prompts to much that is evil in thought, and unjust and erroneous in action.

Hatred is partly involuntary; it will be found to arise from the circumstances just mentioned, spontaneously; at least without any apparent effort, or any agency of the will upon it. It is also depending partly, upon physical temperament, and perhaps in so far as it is an involuntary principle. It will be found to be more readily excited, and more difficultly removed in the choleric disposition, whose aversions are easily formed, and are usually exceedingly permanent; a circumstance which will put the parent upon her guard in the management of such a mental constitution, to avoid the production of hatred, to fortify the mind against it by good principle, and to turn it towards its *proper objects*. More frequently however, hatred arises from evil disposition, and usually as such, requires watchfulness. It is then commonly unjust, arising from very insufficient causes, is seldom satisfied with the bare indulgence of dislike, but rather seeks to compass the punishment, aye, even the destruction of those who are its object.

Disgust is a form of aversion which more frequently attaches itself to things than to persons; and when, as is too frequently the case, it is placed on objects of an indifferent nature, it should be conquered by the intervention of *custom*, which is in fact another term for the *repetition*

of that effort of reason, by which we persuade ourselves to look without horror, to hear without dismay, to taste without nausea, to touch without fear, objects of sight, hearing, taste, or touch, which on their first impression, may have produced an instinctive recoil. The occasions for repressing disgust are almost innumerable; they are commonly produced by trivial events, and require only energy of perseverance in order to be subdued.

Hatred is a powerfully operative passion: where its influence can be seen uncontrouled as in savage life, it will be found implacable, pursuing its victim with relentless consistency from father to son, from tribe to tribe, from generation to generation, until it be satisfied by the retribution it has inflicted. It will prompt to deeds of outrage and sins of the darkest die; the first blood which crimsoned this miserable world, the blood of a younger brother, was shed in consequence of the indulgence of this passion; the cruelty and injustice of Joseph's brethren, resulted from this principle; the immediate cause of the crucifixion of our adorable Redeemer originated here, for "they hated him without a cause." It is also the fruitful source of domestic disquietude; anger, jealousy, hatred sow the seeds of discord, and foster them into maturity; the dream of domestic peace becomes only the waking fancy of a good man, who, in the reverie of enthusiasm, forgets the agency of sin in disturbing all his calculations, forgets for a moment his personal

proximity to vice; finds the soft music of celestial harmony stealing upon his senses, and fondly fancies that he can transplant this peace to the cold and clouded clime of which he is really an inhabitant, yet a houseless wanderer; a weary, way-worn pilgrim, marching through Immanuel's land to mansions in the skies.

If any thing farther were necessary to prove the evil tendency of hatred, we shall find that it has been classed among the works of the flesh by the apostle, of which he predicates, that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians v. 21.) Its influence too has been ably sketched by the pen of the wise man, for "Hatred stirreth up strifes: he that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth slander is a fool." "Hatred is covered by deceit." (Proverbs x. 12. 18. xxvi. 26.) The history of every age; the annals of the world; the records of nations; the experience of families, and the commentary of every unprejudiced observer, will tend to shew the truth of these remarks. The principle of hatred is the source of quarrelling and contention; it is a passion which is commonly concealed, and even its overt acts are attempted to be glossed over with falsehood; slander is the very element in which it lives and luxuriates; and artfulness and deceit become necessary to give even the colouring of justice and expediency to its actions; and yet for all this, man is pronounced a fool; deficient in understanding; wanting not only the wisdom of the

just, but the usual manifestations of sound intellect; a *fool*, that thing from which all instinctively recoil, and feel sorely wounded if they are esteemed such by their fellow men; a *fool* in the eyes of Omniscience; one who is too *weak* to consider his ways and be wise; one who is too weak to seek direction from on high; too weak to govern his own conduct, or to acknowledge his errors, or to seek support from Him, in whom alone it is to be found; too weak to subordinate his own passions to the welfare of himself, the good of society, or the honour of God; and moreover, one who is too wicked, as well as weak, to confess his wanderings, to acknowledge his errors, to repent him truly of his sins, and to seek forgiveness in the atoning sacrifice of Him who is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and strength.

Such is the common operation of hatred in the present scenes: but it *might be* a conservative principle, if it were directed towards its *proper object;* and it *may* be worthy of approbation, when well founded, and legitimate in its application. The only proper object of this passion is *sin:* all that is hateful in the sight of God, may be justly hated by his children. Hatred, then, can only be legitimately employed, not as an active, but as a *defensive principle,* exerted both for *ourselves* and *others;* and when it is directed against *vice* and *iniquity,* and not against *the person,* even in whom these are found to exist. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am

not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies." (Psalm cxxxix. 21, 22.) A superficial glance may induce the observer for a moment to suspect that the Psalmist's exclamation was at variance with the limits above defined for *just hatred*; but a little consideration will shew that it is not the *persons*, but their attributes, which are the objects of his hatred: thus he hates those that hate God, and is grieved with those that rise up against him, in so far as they do so; in so far as these qualities predominate in their actions; thus does he esteem them his enemies, in so far as they are the enemies of his Lord; in so far as they are traitors to his government, and rebels to his authority; in so far as they have thrown off their allegiance to Him, and avowed their hostility to his laws; in fact, in so far as they are sinful and depraved, and to every good work reprobate. Thus, though by a figure of speech the person is substituted for the quality, it is yet evident that hatred is directed towards the *sinful character*, and not against the person; since the only designation of the Lord's enemies is by the manifestations of their minds. It is necessary most carefully to separate the man from his actions; and while we hold up certain traits of character as objects of hatred, most sedulously to inculcate pity towards the individuals, desire for their real good, anxiety to promote their best interests, and prayer to God for them, when we do not possess the means of otherwise doing them

good. It will be a great object in education to give its legitimate bias to this passion *early*, and to exercise it upon that which is essentially *evil*: so shall we find less difficulty in controuling its erroneous tendencies, and preserving it from becoming the source of greater alienation from God.

c. Resentment.

Hatred assumes the name of resentment, when it is nurtured in the soul, in consequence of an injury received, or a misfortune caused by him who is its object, and when it is associated with the desire of retaliation. Resentment may rankle in the bosom for a long time, and in consequence, emotions of the most anti-social kind may be harboured; such as we would blush to acknowledge to the world; which we should hesitate to confess even to ourselves, and which we dare not avow before Him who searcheth the heart! What a proof is this of the perversity of the human mind, and of the extensive influence of natural corruption, that we should so frequently indulge a passion which our own reason, the voice of conscience, the judgment of our fellow men, and the laws of God, all declare to be unworthy of rational immortal creatures, destructive of the social compact, and unjust and injurious towards God. Resentment is a principle of active hatred, which is subversive of our peace of mind: even with all our sinfulness about us, in the midst of unhallowed passion and desire, we *feel* that resentment should have no congenial residence in the bosom;

since during its existence there, an uneasiness, an irritation, a want of comfort is produced, which strongly characterizes the absence of that regularity of action, by which alone the harmony of the mental manifestations can be secured. Thus to a certain extent does its indulgence bring with it its own punishment, and thus on this selfish principle should it be stifled and subdued; and when to this we add, that it is an offence against God, and will deservedly incur his wrath, and merit future punishment, while it destroys his image, and impugns the equity of his government, surely there is abundant cause why the germ of this principle should be destroyed.

It is the attribute of a little mind to indulge a feeling of resentment, and to seek its gratification by inflicting pain upon its object; it is a proof of a great mind to pass over injuries as though they had not been, and to act towards those from whom they have been received with that generosity and magnanimity which claim our admiration, and ensure our esteem. But what says the *law of God*, and what is the extent of the christian principle of the forgiveness of injuries, and of the subjugation of selfish desire? "Ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." And again, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them which curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them

which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust!" How then can we daily pray that our sins may be forgiven, as we ourselves forgive the trespasses of others against us, if the passion of resentment be indulged instead of being repressed; if we do not compassionate our enemies; if we be not in perfect love and charity with all mankind; if we seek to do them evil rather than good; and if we be not actuated by the simple desire to promote their present and eternal welfare. This, then, is the principle to be developed in opposition to a feeling of natural resentment; so that when we receive injury we may strive to return good, to conciliate where we cannot change the heart, and to disarm hostile feeling where we cannot remove the prejudice in which it has originated.

d. Vengeance.

Revenge is the consummation of hatred and resentment, commonly augmented by cool and determined malice. There is a relative connection between the three, in estimating which it may be said, that *hatred* more frequently exhausts itself in words; *resentment* usually occupies the heart, or is exhibited in little acts of pettish retaliation; while vengeance manifests its mighty power in action; bears down before it all restraint; overwhelms every moral principle;

destroys every benevolent feeling, and with the fulness of pernicious purpose seeks to satiate its malignity in the completeness of its retribution. It is in the boldness of its relief, and in the strength of its colouring, the master passion of savage life; *there* an injury inflicted upon an individual, or his family, or his tribe, is to be atoned for, not by submission on the one hand, or forgiveness on the other, (virtues unknown to the natural heart of man in the state of its corruption,) but by punishment equally if not more sanguinary and severe. Thus it is the glory of the savage warrior never to pardon an offence, but to follow his enemy in a spirit of revenge; to trace his footsteps; to watch his opportunity; to haunt his path; to suffer his desire of vengeance to be abated by no length of time, no act of kindness, no feeling of remorse; to steal upon him in his unprotected state, in his hour of repose, and to quench his thirst for retaliation in the blood of his victim, and of his unoffending, inoffensive family; or to exhaust his ingenuity in inventing protracted torments to his prisoner, before the last merciful blow should put an end at once to this convincing proof, that savage life is not a state of innocence, and finally close this display of cruelty on the one hand, and of heroic fortitude on the other, exhibited for the purpose of preventing the triumphant foe from enjoying the full luxury of revenge, which would wait only for any extorted symbol of weakness from the dying sufferer, in order to be complete.

Such is the passion of revenge, when uncontrouled by education, social institution, human laws, or religious principle. And although we may not find such extremity of malice and wickedness in our own happy isle, protected as it is by mild paternal laws, and blessed with the universal diffusion of Christianity; yet the germ of this passion is equally to be found in the bosom of infancy, and unless controuled by education, and superseded by religious principle and motive, it will go as far as it dare go; it will murder the reputation, where fear will preserve the life of its object; and even *here*, will sometimes be found to lead to the commission of the last and deepest crimes. Nor is the puny revenge of the infant to be lightly esteemed, because it is a "telum imbelle sine ictu:" let it be recollected that age, and malice, and knowledge, and criminal intention will give it power, will plunge the poisoned shaft into the cauldron of unsubdued passion, and will communicate force to wield, and sagacity and cunning to direct the envenomed arrow with unerring certainty to the destruction of its victim. The watchful solicitude of maternal duty must be aimed against the *origin* of this evil propensity, or it will never succeed in arresting its after manifestations.

Revenge originates in that feeling of soreness which is consequent upon the impression of real or fancied injury, and from a desire of visiting the infliction of such injury with summary retribution. Thus it is generally dependent upon the feeble-

ness of man, upon the consciousness of his weakness, and upon the inability to repair the breach which has been made upon his property or peace; it is dependent upon the wound which has been occasioned to his self-love, and the offence which has been consequently excited. And this passion is as visible in the nursery, and as readily produced by the fracture of a play thing, or by one of the first efforts of maternal correction, as it too frequently is in after life, by any of the more important events of time. And if the mind be not disciplined to bear these slighter evils, and to subdue the earliest workings of corrupt passion, how shall it afterwards sustain the weightier contentions of existence, and resist the more operative demands of evil will? And if the frontier of the mental territory be not defended from invasion, what safety can be anticipated for the citadel,—what but the downfal of its fairest hopes, when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon it.

Nor is it enough to combat the agency of this passion, by any thing short of the influence of christian principle; for although a great mind may overlook and despise injury, yet this is not the state of feeling required by Christianity, which enjoins *forgiveness*: it is in fact only the revenge of one who contemplates his foe as too mean, too feeble, too powerless, to be worthy of his indignation; and therefore his vengeance consists in the mortification produced by taking no notice of the injury he has sustained. Let parents

beware, how they speciously encourage this refinement of passion, which will only by and by explode with redoubled force, upon the first occasion, that the sense of injury inflicted, shall be great enough to destroy this feeble barrier, this exquisite consciousness of self-love, and self-importance.

Malice and revenge are expressly forbidden by the divine law: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt not revenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord." Leviticus xix. 17, 18. And although the law of retaliation might serve for a moment to countenance the idea of revenge; yet it is manifest that this was peculiarly applicable to a state of society anterior to the Christian dispensation, and before the revelation of the fulness of the gospel of Christ, which, while it has magnified the law, and made it honourable, has also given it a more spiritual meaning, and has transplanted that which was ceremonial, or relating principally to action, to that which is moral, spiritual, and reaching even to the thoughts and intents of the heart. Besides even here, it has been well remarked, that the very law in question was not for the purpose of encouraging, but of placing a defined limit to revenge, that it might not under the influence of passion overstep a certain boundary, which had been thus prescribed by Omniscience, in order to limit punishment and stop the progress and consequences of anger.

Vengeance in itself is a legitimate retribution for injuries voluntarily inflicted, with evil design; but in man's fallen estate, this cannot be delivered over unto the will and passions of the sufferer: hence it becomes the object of human laws, of earthly justice, and a temporal judge: but *chiefly* should it be consigned to the laws of God, the great lawgiver, to Him who ruleth in the heavens; "for *he* will revenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries." Deuteronomy xxxii. 43. It is indeed most true, that revenge, as it comprehends a feeling of injury received, and a desire of punishment, cannot belong to *Him* who is all righteousness, whose peace cannot be disturbed by the evil passions of his erring creatures, and who cannot feel resentment. But our God is just, as well as holy and merciful, and he will vindicate the offences committed against *his* laws, *his* majesty, *his* government; *he* will visit the sins of his people, and the injuries which have been occasioned to the order which *he* has established in the world, yet without any emotion of gratification arising from such punishment. On the contrary, while *he* punishes the guilty contemners of his laws, and revenges the injuries done to his servants, because *he* is just; and because *he* is the Protector of those who fear, and love, and diligently seek him; and because truth and justice, order and virtue must be preserved: yet he hath no pleasure therein; but striveth with man, that

he would return unto Him, repent, believe, and be saved.

The grand object of christian education therefore, is to subdue this passion, and to leave the punishment of injury to the omniscient Judge, "because the Lord is the avenger of all such." 1 Thess. iv. 6. A christian heart, enlightened by the spirit of grace, and animated by faith in its Redeemer, will leave the judgment and revenge of all injuries to that God, who declareth, that to *Him* "belongeth vengeance and recompense;" "their foot shall slide in *due* time, for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that come upon them make haste." Deut. xxxii. 35. The forgiveness of injuries, and confidence in God that *he* will vindicate the cause of the oppressed; *these* form the basis upon which this passion is to be educated; for, "there was in a city a judge which feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while, but afterwards, he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them. I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." Luke xviii. 2—8. And to sum up all, let us hear the conclusion:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Romans xii. 19—21.

Section III. *Of Avarice—of Ambition.*

The love of earthly good, and the desire of earthly distinction, are two principles which largely actuate the mind, and constitute the passions of avarice and ambition. These impel the man to evil, contract the heart, wither every benevolent emotion, and prove most serious obstacles to the growth of virtue, and the reception of religious truth; hence their first rudiments should be opposed, and every opportunity for their exercise should be obviated.

a. Avarice.

This passion consists in the excess of prudence and foresight, and care; and in its desires being placed upon those riches which make to themselves wings and flee away, rather than upon durable riches and righteousness. This state of mind also is generally connected with the *fear* of poverty; and, as will be presently shewn, the

influence of fear possesses a very extensive hold upon the manifestations of mind: *this fear* is made the prominent motive for hoarding, and the excuse for indulging that passionate love of money, which the avaricious designate as economy, and as the result of that principle which should induce every one "to lay by him in store as the Lord hath prospered him," always taking pains to forget that *this* accumulation was solely for the purpose of charitable distribution.

Avarice is not often found to exist in early infancy to excess; nor in those who are of a sanguine temperament, in whom hope and a carelessness of to-morrow largely predominate, and who are consequently more prone to ambition than to avarice. But its influence is often manifested in the melancholic, in those whose views and anticipations of futurity assume a gloomy tinge; and is frequently produced, or at least readily developed in those who suffer from bodily infirmity, whom sickness has rendered selfish and careful about many things. But it will be found to exist where these exciting causes have not preceded its development: it will be sometimes met with as an independent passion, and will then consist in the mere love of accumulation, whatever may be the specious pretext, under which such a desire and its consequent pursuits are attempted to be cloaked.

Avarice is particularly prominent towards the close of life; it seems to gather strength, in proportion as the feebleness of the body, and the

dwindling days of old age forbid the enjoyment of the goods of fortune; and is extinguishable but with life itself.

Yet this is a sightless propensity; it is blind even to present interest and comfort; for the result of this excessive care, is, that the miser occasions to himself pain; that he enjoys nothing; that he becomes the slave of his own possessions; that he endures hardships and privations in the midst of abundance; that he enlarges constantly the circle of his wants by the growing desire of accumulation, a desire which is always augmented by satisfaction,) for itself renders us incapable of supplying our necessities,) and which lingers on to the very last thread of existence, when the frail web which connects him to his wealth is snapped asunder, and he leaves his riches to those who come after him, to be dissipated perhaps by he knows not whom; so true is it, that "he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." Prov. v. 10. The care of riches, and the desire of adding to them, produce anxiety, and subject the mind to an endurance of the misery which it most dreads, viz. poverty with all its horrors; for avarice lives in the constant dread and anticipation of this fearful evil, an *anticipation* which, it is well known, is far more insupportable than the reality. "When goods increase, they are increased that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? The sleep

of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much, but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep;" (Eccles. v. 11, 12.) so that he endures all the misery of poverty without its consolation, and wants even that sweet oblivion of his cares, which places the poorest peasant, on a level, nay on a pinnacle of advantage, far above the mightiest monarch of the world. "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease." Eccles. vi. 1, 2.

Farther, the indulgence of avarice leads to vice, for "he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be *innocent*." Prov. xxviii. 20. The avaricious is not very scrupulous about the *mode* of his accumulations, provided only that he can accumulate: the predominant passion of his bosom is to add to his hoard, and though he may wish to do so with *as little injustice to others as possible;* yet *where* truth and justice, honour and virtue, principle and religion, his duty to others as well as to his God, come *in competition* with his favourite passion, they are accounted only as the small dust of the balance. The same influence is visible in his expenditure, he is unjust towards his creditors; the cry of distress, the tear of sorrow, the wretchedness of poverty, the anguish of disease, the night of dissolution, have

no claim upon his exertions; he has no ear to hear, no eye to see, no heart to pity, no power to save; the fatherless and the widow present no sufficient demand upon his benevolence; the houseless and the friendless pass unnoticed and unheeded; his heart is hardened: "there is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches;" Proverbs xiii. 7; so true is it, that our life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that we possess.

But the influence of avarice is still more banefully exerted in opposing the agency of religion upon the heart, which is so contracted that it cannot receive its principles, and so increasingly narrowed, that even the good seed of divine truth is ejected from it; "the cares of this world, and the *deceitfulness* of riches, choke the word and it becometh unfruitful." Matthew xiii. 22. Riches are indeed *deceitful*, especially as they afford the means of diffusive alms-giving, and thus cheat their possessors, into a belief of their benevolence, while in fact their splendid donations are only considered in the light of a tax imposed upon wealth, and due to influence, and altogether want those properties, which constitute the mite of the widow, and not the munificent offering of the rich, the product of real charity. Besides, the avaricious *trust* in their riches, instead of in the living God, and it has been declared by the highest authority, that such shall enter into the kingdom of heaven with difficulty. Thus then,

injustice, hardness of heart, a concentration of feeling upon himself, carelessness of religious duty, and a high degree of unconcern for the great design of laying up treasures in heaven, mark the fell agency of avarice. There is however a distinction between this passion and selfishness, which deserves to be noticed; the former is a much more subtle and deeply seated passion than the latter; it pursues its object with more unrelenting assiduity, while selfishness is often the creature of circumstance, the immediate impulse of momentary feeling, and again giving way to some kindlier emotion. Selfishness refers to present, and immediate gratification, the possession of some supposed instantaneous advantage; while avarice is placed upon a distant and contingent good, and sacrifices every comfort now, virtue, principle, religious hope, for a distant, undefined, and uncertain creation of money; not for the comforts it may procure, but *for itself*. Selfishness prefers "le moi" to every thing, and subordinates every pursuit, motive, and principle to selfish pleasure; while avarice refuses to listen to the voice of present gratification—nay, even denies itself the comforts, and almost the very necessaries of existence, submits to privations, and stoops to meannesses, and condescends to evasions, and subjects itself to perpetual disquietude, the canker of the soul, and the contempt of others, for the one resistless and overwhelming passion of accumulation.

The great corrective of this passion is the un-

certainty of human life, the brevity of its largest span, and the little prospect there is of any one individual reaching to its common term, much less of creeping on beyond it, and the utter uselessness of riches in the grave. "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go; and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind." Ecclesiastes v. 15, 16. Even supposing that there existed a possibility of satisfying the desires of avarice, admitting that it may be called prudence and foresight, that it really consisted in laying by provision for old age, and that when the rich man's ground had brought forth plentifully, when he had accumulated abundant stores, when he had no farther room to bestow his fruits and his goods, when he contemplated enlarging his means of adding heap to heap, and when he had reached that impossible period of satisfaction, in which he could truly say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" supposing that such a period should ever arrive in the history of avarice, *what then?* what saith the scripture of truth, but that God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night, thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." Luke xii. 19, 20.

While then the uncertainty of life forms the great *corrective* of *avarice;* it is to be *superseded* by employing the principle from which it springs, viz. prudence, in the pursuit of durable riches and righteousness; for "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." Proverbs x. 22. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour; her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her." Proverbs iii. 13—18.

Such then are the objects of christian education, with the view of superseding the senseless desire of accumulation, and to supplant it by the only analogous pursuit, worthy of an immortal mind, the desire and the search after that wisdom which will shed its blessing on the present moment, will grow up into approaching maturity with augmented years and experience, and will be consummated in eternity. But it is not enough, that these principles be generally kept in view; the christian parent must be *uniform* in her plans; and it is of great consequence, that she do not by her own conduct, *inadvertently excite* those feelings which will lead to the de-

velopment of this passion. With this view, it would perhaps be better to avoid giving *money as such*, for the reward of particular exertion or good behaviour, lest it should *seem* to attach to this commodity, a degree of value which it ought not to possess, and which may readily produce a fondness for it, either as a good to hoard, or to be expended in selfish gratification. Of the two evils, the latter is certainly the least. The objection to rewards in money, will in a great measure be obviated by holding out encouragement to good behaviour, in the form of tickets, possessing an imaginary value, and a certain number of which will entitle their possessor to a *certain* small stipend, a plan which fixes the mind on the ticket rather than the coin, and by rendering it more a matter of purchase, does not leave the same degree of room for covetous emotion, as in the more casual and uncertain system of immediate pecuniary recompense. But perhaps it might be advisable to reward in a different way altogether, unless the direction of the expenditure of the small sums thus obtained, be that of relieving ignorance, or distress, or sickness, or indigence; in which case, the *subserviency* of money to the necessities of others, and *its want* of value *except* as thus applied, are ideas which come to be associated with its possession; and which effectually exclude covetousness, and lead the mind to the practice of self-denial, benevolence, pity, charity; all principles so inconsistent with avarice, that if *they* can be established, there will be

no danger from the love of money. The child must be taught not to hoard its little treasures; nor to expend them upon hurtful trifles, but to submit their disposal to parental care and guidance; and let the mother's *first* object be to develop the principle and the act of charity; and her *second*, that the purchased article be something *useful* as well as pleasing; not simply a medium for amusement, but one which will be either wholly instructive, or which will at the least *combine* instruction with amusement, and lead the mind to the acquisition of some substantial good.

We cannot quite dismiss the passion of avarice, without noticing the rights of private property. These are often invaded in the nursery; one child covets the possession of another; and it becomes a question, whether the rightful but unwilling owner should be made to yield his right, in order to avoid that squabbling which is so painful among children; or whether the little covetous and fraudulent possessor should be compelled to abandon its ill-gotten plaything, at the expense of the passion and evil will which will be produced? Some mischief is probably likely to ensue in any case, among these contending interests; but it should be laid down as a principle, that the rights of private property should be held sacred and entire; for if children should grow up with vague and undefined notions on this subject, consequences the most painful might ensue, and which might eventually lead through the

gradual diminution of principle to the formation of *habits of theft*. This right, then, is at all events to be preserved inviolate: it is, however, of great importance to prevent the exercise of the passion of avarice, even with regard to the accumulation of playthings; and children should be encouraged, exhorted, and systematically taught to rejoice in giving pleasure to each other by a participation of their means of amusement, and by freely lending to each other the separate articles of their individual stores. And where the supposed case of the collision of interests has taken place, every argument should be employed to induce the one benevolently to waive his *right* for the temporary enjoyment of the other, and to lead the little unjust possessor to abandon his fraudulently acquired property; but where argument and inducement fail, *bribery* must not be had recourse to, for no *permanent good* will ever result from the employment of evil; and therefore the original right of property *must* be respected, and the assumed but unjust right of possession *must* be yielded. This appeal to justice should be held quite as a dernier resort, and is never to be employed until other lawful means fail, nor until it becomes a question between sacrificing peace or principle, and *then* the latter must be uncompromisingly upheld.

b. Ambition.

Ambition consists in the immoderate desire of overtaking or surpassing those who pursue the

same career with ourselves; not so much for any real advantages possessed by them, as for the external splendour and pre-eminence with which they are invested. As such, it is important that parents do not, in their system of discipline, constitute great and galling distinctions for those who *do well*, lest the young be tempted to pursue the *honour*, rather than to grapple with the diligent acquisition which confers it: for while emulation *may* be encouraged, the heart *should* be most sedulously guarded from the influence of *ambition*.

The grand distinctions between these associated passions will be found by a reference to the principles on which they are founded, and to the emotions to which they give birth. *Distinction* of *any* kind is the object of pursuit with the ambitious; the distinction of being good, and doing well, is the legitimate aim of emulation. *Ambition* sighs over the possessions and honours of another, which are, to its greatest efforts, quite unattainable; *emulation* encourages itself in the pursuit of some solid good, and rejoices in the hope of still greater acquisition; *ambition* derives pain from the success and advancement of a competitor; *emulation* is delighted with the happiness of others, and strives to reach that ground of moral and intellectual attainment, on which it appears to grow and flourish; *ambition* will sacrifice every principle to its one grand object; *emulation* pursues only that path which strengthens principle, and purifies motive, and enlarges the

views, and simplifies desire; *ambition* is malignant in its influence, for it would strip from the brow of others the laurels which adorn them, and it would compass its designs, reckless of any amount of suffering it might occasionally inflict; *emulation* is benevolent, and while it strives to overtake others in the same career of virtue, yet can assist their endeavours, and earnestly pray for success upon their exertions; *ambition* is the characteristic of the fallen angels; *emulation* that of the inhabitants of a heavenly world, who rest not day nor night singing the praises of Him who has redeemed them by his blood, and made them kings and priests unto God, even the Father. Pride, selfishness, hatred, malevolence, envy, and a spirit of detraction are the foster principles, or the immediate progeny of *ambition*; while *emulation* is humble, disinterested, seeks the love and esteem of others; is sincere, modest, unpretending, diligent, just towards competitors, patient and persevering in adversity, meek, diffident, retiring, and thinks and speaks well of its rivals.

Ambition is preserved in its power and influence by the restlessness of indefatigable pursuit; it is a passion so widely operative, that nothing can satisfy its demands; its highest reach only serves to enlarge the desires; and the subjection of *the world* to its will, would produce only the wish that there was another world for conquest. Disappointed to-day, it is more anxious for the success of to-morrow; it is bolder in its intrigues;

it multiplies the windings of its crooked policy; it is more servile and abject; it makes larger concessions to expediency; it yields more of principle and virtue to the guilty *éclat* of success; it becomes meaner that it may appear more honourable; it accommodates its views and feelings to *every* change; it shapes its course so as to catch *every* favouring breeze; it meanders with the stream till it finally floats on the ocean of magnificent design; attains the summit of practicable pursuit, and is *unhappy;* or is lost on that deceitful element, whose placid surface may shortly be agitated by mountainous billows, and which contains beneath it rocks, and sands, and whirlpools, and currents enough to lead the ambitious to the most miserable termination of their career.

Ambition is surrounded by anxiety during its most active hours; disquietude broods over its pillow, and scares its victim with dreams of blighted prospects, or of the frightful sacrifices which must be made to ensure success; haggard disappointment awaits its waking hour; life is passed in this fever of the soul; the chill of fearful suspicion, the reaction of continued pursuit, and the collapse of exhausted energy, disappointed hope, and that state of feebleness which prepares the way, by augmented duplicity, for a renewal of the same morbid state—a state, which must assemble unavailing regret about the scenes of closing existence, and deeply-felt remorse for the torments inflicted on itself and others, in the

empty hope of reaching its consummation, with a certain degree of *éclat* above that which attaches to common place characters.

The ambitious man never knows the sweet season of rest; even with the stimulus of prospective success, he is always breathless with anxiety and eager desire; he is chained to the ever-varying rock of the favour and patronage of the great, while the vulture care preys upon his heart; the atmosphere of political intrigue is that in which he lives, though he can never breathe in it with freedom; sleep forsakes his pillow; he enjoys no social pleasure, for his pursuits are exclusive and anti-social; nature and all her wonders possess no charm for him, for they cannot stimulate sufficiently a mind already goaded to its highest degree of excitation; there can be no appetite for intellectual objects; there is no pleasure, but this one unsatisfying shadow, which has cast its veil over all that is usually attractive to literary, or interesting to social man. Even hope does not expand his bosom, but agitates it with painful palpitation; he is mocked by fear, and tormented by impatience, and agonized by procrastination; he is the victim of insanity, a delirium which knows no termination but in death, and which scarcely leaves a hope for hereafter; for what happiness can there be in heaven for one, who to his last painful hour has never known a moment's peaceful respite from uninterrupted pursuit after the baubles of existence, by all means, and at all hazards; in whose heart love

to man has no abiding residence; whose reverence for the Deity, and respect to his laws, has always yielded to every renewed prospect of success; whose bosom has been the cherished seat of envy, and the favourite abode of malignant passion; whose brain has been irritated by the constant stimulation of incessant action and fatigue, and weariness without repose; and who now in the agony of disappointment, without resource, becomes the victim of ennui, and reaches the miserable close of a wretched, hopeless existence, through the gloomy, cheerless portal of slowly consuming, burdensome, helpless paralysis; or the not less frightful, because more sudden termination of *hope* in apoplexy; for when the expiring taper of life has been fanned to its last flickering ray by such passions, what hope can there be beyond the grave, in that world where sin cannot enter?

The following description of the ambitious is so truly graphic, and so little accessible to general readers, as to atone for its length, and its foreign dress:—" S'élever, ramper, s'enorgueillir, s'humilier, ménacer, flatter, espérer, se décourager, troubler sa vie par mille craintes, la dessécher par d'inutiles désirs, perdre le temps en vaines poursuites, s'épuiser en efforts, louer les hommes en face, les calomnier dans l'ombre, prostituer son épée, vendre sa conscience, se prosterner devant la bassesse, boire à longs traits l'ignominie, se morfondre à la porte des grands, s'accomoder à tous les caprices, tourner à tous les vents, adopter

successivement toutes les maximes, se glisser dans toutes les avenues, prendre la vertu pour masque et le crime pour échelon, allumer les haines, semer les soupçons, faire naitre des défiances, ourdir des trames, tendre des embûches, voilà les rôles, voilà les métamorphoses de l'ambition."—Alibert Physiologie des Passions, tom. ii. p. 339.

And if such be a true picture of this passion, when left to its own uncontrouled agency; and if to this we may add the experience of past ages, and even the history of our own times; if we look to the miserable, and often shameful end of the ambitious favourite of despotic power, or the still less enviable finale of the popular idol; if we recollect the history especially of great military conquerors; if we follow their career from conquest to conquest, and to the consummation of their hopes, and the fulness of political power; if we trace their secret plans, and jealousies, and suspicions; if we look to the changing tide of events, and observe him who has stretched his sway over the nations, who has conquered where he came, who has intimidated where he has not conquered, and who has tormented where he could not intimidate; before whom nations and individuals have crouched in abject servility, and who has scarcely experienced a repulse; if we now contemplate the latter days of his life, and see the setting sun, shorn of its splendor, a captive exile, depending for his existence upon the bounty of others, and pining away the last term of existence under the mortifications of chagrin

and sorrow; or if we recollect the frequency with which the ambitious has reached the narrow goal of life, by a violent death from the public executioner; or torn by passion, has rushed unbidden into the presence of his Maker, and has thrown away the last remnant of hope, the only chance for better thoughts and better principles; surely we shall be anxious to oppose this passion steadily and firmly, to subdue its first feeble workings, and to destroy in the germ, that, which if it vegetate will flourish, and if it flourish will produce the baneful fruits we have contemplated.

It is not enough to oppose the influence of the passion wherever it exists; it is not enough to shew the unsatisfactory nature of success, or the cruel disappointment of failure; the crimes which stand in the way of the former, or the neglect and misery which attend the latter; all these are too feeble to resist the impulse of ambition, which must therefore be employed on *some* worthy object. Let *this object* be the pursuit of wisdom, the wisdom of the Bible. "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding: I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me. Riches and *honour* are with me; yea, durable

riches and righteousness." Proverbs viii. 12—18. Thus honour, the very object of ambition, is placed at the goal of the pursuit of wisdom: but it is an honour which satisfies, and which stands in antithetical apposition with *righteousness*. But "the fear of the Lord is the *beginning of wisdom;* and before *honour* is humility:" Proverbs xv. 33. So that to live, and act, and think, and feel, as in the fear of the Lord, results from that wisdom whose capital leads to the truest honour, but whose base rests on humility, that last acquisition of true knowledge, and wanting which, nothing has yet been learned as it ought to be learned: yea, "blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew v. 5.

Such then are the objects of moral education; humility, wisdom, righteousness, honour; these are the several links in the chain of association, which will detach the mind from the sordid pursuits of a vain and fleeting passion, and employ it on substantial good. We have heard of a noble ambition, and there does exist such a thing, although not in its usual acceptation. Naturally, there is no nobleness or generosity, in the manifestations of this passion: on the contrary, it is essentially and radically mean and selfish; but that ambition is noble, which consists in the subjection of sin, and in the removal of its influence from the heart and life; in the cultivation of faith, hope, and charity, and in the practice of their associated virtues. "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife." Proverbs xx. 3. And "he

that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." Prov. xvi. 32. Here indeed is an object worthy of ambition's highest reach; one which may be pursued without injury to others, without compromising one principle, with an approving, instead of an upbraiding conscience, with a certainty of success if persevered in with sincerity, and with the equally certain escape from disappointment here; and the reward of humble, consistent, though frail, feeble, and frequently erring exertion in the cause of God. It will be also found, that the higher the attainments in virtue, the greater will be the desire after its pursuit, the more ample the means of attaining it; so that in contradistinction to the usual course of ambition, *here*, the higher it reaches, the greater is its capacity for exertion; the more does it enjoy of conformity to the will of God, and the more earnestly does it aim to be made like him, and to be transformed into his image.

Section IV. *Of Emulation—of Envy.*

a. Emulation.

The immediate and legitimate influence of this passion is, that it leads to imitation, in order to equal or surpass the good actions of those who are pursuing the same career with ourselves, in *so far* as those actions *are* good and praise-worthy,

as they originate in unquestioned motives, as they are based upon good principle, and as they are supported by purity of thought, and virtuous design. Or farther, it will induce us to copy the example of some high and holy being, set forth as a pattern of good works, to whom as "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," though we cannot hope to resemble fully, yet we will humbly approach, emulating his untainted life, and desiring, seeking, striving, contending, and struggling after conformity to his will. Or in a much lower sense, it may stimulate the man to act up to himself, to his advantages, to his situation, to his *former self;* to remember whence he has fallen, to repent, and do the first works; that he may finally overcome, and eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Even when the views have not been sanctified, and purified, and ennobled by religion, emulation may still act as a beneficial stimulus, in preserving man from sinking lower in the scale of society; in teaching him to act up to his talents and acquirements, to the respect which he has inspired, the consideration with which he is invested, the opinion of his prudence and wisdom, his character for uprightness, and fidelity to his promises, and unshaken probity, and other social virtues; in fact, to the imitation of himself in his best moments, or even to the estimate which may have been formed of him, however erroneously, by others.

In all these respects, emulation is in simple

truth, the faculty of imitation roused to action; it raises and multiplies the powers of the soul by increasing its resources, and by proposing for its pursuit a higher standard than its present level; by setting before it examples worthy of resemblance; by elevating the man to his model; inducing him to forego all that is low, and selfish, and grovelling, and sordid; and placing him under the influence of noble, and generous, and pure, and holy motives. Thus then emulation is a grand principle of improvement, and of continued progress towards that perfection after which we should *aim*, although we know that our highest efforts will fall infinitely short of what *we ought to be;* and that it is only in the strength of the Most High, that we can maintain our present standing, much less *advance* in the way of holiness, and the path to heaven. Nevertheless, it is *ours so to* act, to think, to speak, to strive with our utmost effort, as if success depended upon that effort alone, although we fully know that exertion will be unavailing, unless blessed by divine grace. But that power has been promised to those who seek, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; who do sincerely desire to resemble Christ, and to be transformed into his image. All that is great, and good, and beautiful, and holy, owes its origin to this principle, is kept alive by it, and advances to maturity through its influence; the principle of divine grace is excited into action, yea, blossoms into fruit.

Under a variety of circumstances, the power of

emulation is seen to exert its agency over the conduct of animals: and since *here* it is not possible that *envy* can exist, we may be allowed to conclude that the two are not coincident principles; that *originally* they possessed nothing in common; and consequently that emulation is not a *diminutive of envy*. It is readily granted, that the former passion unguardedly employed, may, in the present depraved state of the human mind, readily develop envy, but we argue not against its use from its abuse. *Emulation* is noble and delicate in its influence upon the mind, while *envy* degrades: the *one* aims at a high standard of good, the *other* only envies the prosperity and reputation attendant upon such aim, while its very existence proves a decided aversion from all that is good: *emulation* is a stimulus to the indolent, and proves a bonus upon industry, while *envy* confirms the slothful in his habits, and withers the active principle of good: *emulation* is never satisfied with the attainment of to-day, but seeks a still higher reach to-morrow; while *envy* has not even a languid wish, much less a fervent desire for improvement, but is only anxious to obtain the praise, for what it does not possess, or even wish for: *emulation* is the lot of great, while the cherished abode of *envy* will be found in weak minds: *emulation* is a passion which exists in the bosom of the good man, while *envy* lurks in the heart of the wicked, and prompts to evil: *emulation* is a desire to exert or to imitate excellence,

("even so ye, forasmuch as ye are *zealous* of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may *excel* to the edifying of the church;" 1 Corinthians xiv. 12.) while *envy* is the misery of the soul, arising from the contemplation of excellence which it has no wish to participate for its own worth; *emulation* is universally operative wherever good example, or good precept may be found, but *envy* is confined to the little daily occasions which develop its influence: *emulation* is constantly looking forward, it has respect to futurity, and its highest hopes are fixed on the best future, while *envy* is bound down to time and circumstance; it is absorbed by the present; it seeks not, wishes not, desires not to contemplate the future, which is only an increasing torment to its present consciousness; and lastly, while *emulation* rejoices in the good of others, esteems them the more the better they are, and while it seeks to imitate their example, loses the sense of the person and their many infirmities, in the one great desire of emulating their good qualities; *envy* recks not for the *value* of the character, and attaches itself only to the praise and honour which it possesses, but which it is conscious of not deserving, and which it has no intention of seeking to deserve.

The power of emulation, so far as it depends upon the example of contemporaries, is lost in solitude; it is then a social virtue; but in educating the passion, it will generally be safer to instruct the young to emulate the actions

of those who have preceded them, because *these* are more readily separable from the person: but above all, to lead them to the first and highest example proposed for our imitation; since here, there can be *no* fear of awakening evil principles, and since here is the most perfect model.

The influence of example is often allowed and descanted upon, where the *principles* upon which it rests are forgotten: it is, however, only by a reference to these, that we can know how to encourage the faculty of imitation as it exhibits itself in the passion of emulation.

First, general precepts form abstract ideas of virtue, which are always difficultly embraced by the human mind, and are very generally considered as unreal forms, and images of things which do not and cannot exist; but in example, the very virtue itself is made visible in all its circumstances; its principle is inculcated; and its practical detail is enforced.

Secondly, precepts instruct and admonish us, wherein consists our duty, shew us the evils to be abandoned, and the good to be sought after and accomplished. But we might almost be disposed to think both the one and the other unattainable, when we commune with our own hearts, and feel their little disposition to good, and their great propensity to evil. Examples assure us, that the practice of these holy precepts *is* possible: and where others have done good, and resisted evil, have commanded their passions and overcome temptations, have obeyed God, and

escaped the corruptions which are in the world, we too are encouraged to hope, that by the same assistance, we may come off more than conquerors.

Thirdly, the view of good examples excites us to imitation; conscience reproaches us with our defects, and we are urged on to a display of the same zeal and fervent piety, which has been triumphant in others.

The same principle will equally operate on objects of lesser importance: and in proportion as the example proposed for emulation is more perfect, and clashes least with any of our real or supposed present interests, so will it more certainly insure our pursuit and imitation. Hence, the example of Christ, our pure and spotless Redeemer, the Lamb without blemish, is the Christian's first and last object and model for emulation, since *He* alone *is perfect:* but we are not to undervalue the example of holy men of old, of prophets and apostles, early saints and martyrs, primitive Christians, and those who in every age have followed Christ: but then we emulate these only as they imitated the Saviour; and as his first example and will are embodied to us in creatures of our own mould, and divested of that dazzling brightness, which surrounds the lustre of Incarnate Deity, and of unveiled Omnipotence. Thus, our Lord himself, towards the close of his ministry on earth, says—"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you." John xiii. 15. Thus also the apostle

exhorts us,—" Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." 1 Corinthians xi. 1. " For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." 1 Peter ii. 21. But the Scripture abounds with exhortations to emulate the conduct of holy men, in so far as they may have imitated Christ : thus for instance, the apostle exclaims,—" Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" (Philippians iii. 12, 13, 14,) a remarkable passage, in which a parallel is drawn between the emulation of competitors in an earthly race for a temporal prize, a corruptible crown; and the struggling of the Christian in his course towards heaven, lightly esteeming all his past attainments, considering the present state as imperfect, dissatisfied with all that is behind, and emulating all that is before him, in the bright example of Christ; earnestly striving to obtain the prize of victory, the incorruptible crown which fadeth not away.

Again, the apostle declares that he speaks to you Gentiles, " if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might

save some of them." Romans xi. 14. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them, which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample." Philippians iii. 17. "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us. For we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you, neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us." 2 Thessalonians iii. 7, 8, 9. "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Peter v. 3. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience." James v. 10. And lastly, "now these things were our examples to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth,

take heed lest he fall." 1 Corinthians x. 6—12.

If then the legitimate tendency of emulation, be, to elevate man higher in the scale of moral being; if it be a principle of improvement implanted in the human bosom, to give it the power of imitating the high and holy example set before it in the person of the Saviour; if it be found attached even to the existence of animals, and augmented in its influence, and ennobled in its design in immortal man; if it possess characteristic features totally dissimilar from those of envy; if excellence be its stimulus, and the favour of God its highest aim; if it rejoice to emulate good example, and is constantly pressing onwards to futurity; if virtue in action be the object of its imitation, the Word of God its rule, and the example of Christ and his followers its guide; if the adorable Redeemer has held up his own example for our emulation, has encouraged the principle, and given fixedness to its aim; if this has been re-echoed by apostles and prophets, saints and martyrs, holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; if it be constituted a christian motive to energy and perseverance; if it be appealed to as a means of salvation; if the example of the elder Christians be recorded for our imitation; if the apostle declares, that he declined a course of conduct he might *justly* have pursued, that he might excite his followers to emulate his example; if the same principle be rendered available as a matter of

caution, that we, upon whom the ends of the world are come, might deprecate and avoid the errors and sins of unbelievers; and if, in the words of a celebrated writer, (Jer. Taylor, Sermons, vol. i. p. 243.) " the Christian must contend *earnestly* for the faith by the most prevailing arguments, by the arguments of holy living and ready dying, by zeal and patience, by conformity and humility, by reducing words to actions, fair discourses to perfect persuasions; by loving the article, and increasing in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ; and then his faith is not negligent, deceitful, artificial, and improper; but true, and holy, and reasonable, and useful, zealous, and sufficient:" why surely then, there is abundant ground to conclude, that we are not called to frown upon this passion, but to employ it to the glory of God.

The object of christian education, is not to destroy, but to direct. This will require caution; for as *food* is the appointed means of nutrition to the body, yet if it be taken under improper circumstances, in excessive quantity, or of a noxious quality, it will lose its power of invigorating, it will produce or augment disease, will irritate the languid, or oppress the enfeebled powers, or by conveying deleterious qualities to the blood, will disorder the whole frame; so *emulation,* if injudiciously employed, or if it be made too prominent a feature in education; or if it be unwisely mixed up with other feelings, and passions, and motives of a doubtful complexion, and

even more than suspicious character, it will then develop the morbid actions impressed upon the mind by sin, and will lead to a mishapen group of associated passions; or it will stimulate too highly, and thus impair the solidity and strength of character; or will arouse into activity, feelings and motives which have nothing in common with itself, or with christian hope, and christian principle.

The objects of the christian parent are then most clearly defined; viz. to employ the faculty of emulation as a stimulus to good action, *sparingly but firmly;* to constitute the imitation of rectitude of conduct the aim of its constant desire; to fix its views as much as possible, upon examples which have preceded the present time, or upon contemporaries, which are far removed from the possibility of a collision of interest; to be careful *how* it is employed in the family circle, lest anger, jealousy, and envy should be excited; not however to refuse to call in its aid even here, for if carefully detached from the person, and fixed upon the exertion of good conduct, it will form a valuable means of encouraging the diligent, and stimulating the indolent; to make the young constantly feel that the knowledge and the worth of *yesterday*, are not sufficient for the requirements of *to-day;* most clearly to shew, that the influence of emulation however valuable, is limited in comparison with the unbounded field of futurity; that it is sinful, if the desire of virtue be not its object, and the love of excellence

its motive; that it is an uniform principle of action, not to be taken up or laid aside at pleasure, or only occasionally employed; but that it must form part of a system of growing conformity to the *highest* and *holiest* example; that it soars above the metamorphoses of time, and is contented only as it can make the future present—and the present effort conducive to future progress, joy, and peace; and that it must rejoice in the success and the praises of others, be delighted to promote their advancement, to contribute its mite of assistance to procure it, and to feel an honest glow in honouring, admiring, and loving that superiority which it humbly strives to imitate, aye, even to excel.

b. Envy.

Superficial or prejudiced observation has often confounded envy with the passion just considered, although a nearer investigation will shew that they are really dissimilar. It is however probable that emulation was the original faculty upon which envy was grafted, when sin entered into the world; but that lamentable influence has so changed its pristine bias, that it possesses not a single feature in common with its archetype, and is strongly characterized by its unmingled malignity.

Envy is a shameful passion, which we dare not acknowledge to others, and which we seek to conceal even from ourselves, because it degrades and humbles us in our own eyes; and when

most actuated by its influence, we are far too proud to acknowledge its agency, because we are aware that it is a proof of a little mind; that however it may be palliated in the ignorant and the uninformed, it is contemptible in those who pretend to information, and assume to be raised by science, or by social and literary acquirements to a sphere in which the mind is expanded, and taught to take enlarged views of men and things; but it is inconsistent with, it is inimical to, it is altogether destructive of the *christian temper;* for while *this* should be constantly seeking after improvement, and thirsting after righteousness, and striving after conformity to the will of God, and to his image as pourtrayed in the example of his Incarnate Son, and in those who have chosen that better part which consists in sitting at *his* feet, hearing his instructions, and obeying his commands,—*envy* is the silent, the unacknowledged, the denied, and even the reprobated reaction of our self-love, against a superiority of which we are conscious, but which we do not hope, and have no serious intention of endeavouring to *emulate.* Thus envy is the sad inheritance of *little minds,* and none may pride themselves on their enlarged views, and feelings, and designs in whom this passion lurks. It is an evil affection of the heart, which results from chagrin at the possessions, or prosperity, or reputation of others. "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped, for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

So foolish was I and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." Psalm lxxiii. 2, 3, 22. Such is the extensive influence of this evil principle, that it is not wholly extinguished in the righteous, but operates banefully upon them, when they see the prosperity of those who seek not God, forgetting that "a little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked." Psalm xxxvii. 16.

Envy will stoop to any little meanness, in order to *disparage* qualities which it dares not hope to possess; it will extinguish every spark of benevolence in the bosom of man; it will be rendered miserable by the happiness of others, and will secretly rejoice in their calamity; it retires from public observation, and courts the obscurity of inuendo, insinuation, and all the covert attacks of calumny and slander; it prowls abroad during the night of unsuspicious repose, and steals upon the slumbering security of its prey, in order that it may deprive it of the possession of its envied pleasures and advantages, or blunt their enjoyment; it dares not look its victim in the face, but attacks him under cover of darkness, and graduates his unseen hostile approach by repeated parallels, the final object of which is unperceived; or it slowly undermines the reputation by methods the most indirect and unlikely; it abstracts the mind from trusting in God, and doing his will, and produces a fretfulness and impatience, an angry feeling which develops malice, excites evil will towards its objects, and alienates man from

the nature and the life of God, for *he* is *good*, and rejoiceth to be doing *good*. How beautiful is the expostulation of the Psalmist with the envious character, and how exquisitely does he point out the means of superseding this evil passion. "Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. *Trust* in the Lord, and *do* good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." And "he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day. *Rest* in the Lord, and *wait* patiently for him; fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in anywise to do evil, for evil doers shall be cut off; but those that wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." Psalm xxxvii. 1—9.

Envy never derives any degree of enjoyment from the contemplation of another's good; it sickens at his praises, and saddens at his worth. Envy has been often characterized as *pale*, and such *is* the expression of the envious countenance; for it is a depressing passion, and so completely does it overturn the balance of the animal system, that the blood is called back from its usual course,

and the vigour of its circulation is impaired; the minuter subdivisions of the arterial system remain pale and bloodless, while the interior organs, but especially the heart, the brain, and the nutritive system, are loaded and oppressed with an excessive quantity of that fluid; the functions of these several organs are disturbed; a chilliness creeps over the surface; the heart sighs to relieve its oppression, and largely strives to palpitate away its load; the uneasy head leads to feverish dreams, and restless nights; and indigestion is the result. Were there no other consequences arising from the indulgence of envy, these would be sufficient to demonstrate its nefarious origin; for a passion, the indulgence of which mars the finest work of creation, and develops disease which would have been unknown but for the existence of sin, is sufficiently marked as evil by its immediate effects.

But it is also opposed to natural conscience, which upbraids the envious for their malignity, and produces in the mind a feeling of uneasiness, the very opposite to peace—a worm which slowly preys upon the root of our happiness, and saps the foundation of our moral worth. But further, this state is not simply the negation of peace; the envious man knows not *so* happy a moment as that which is merely marked by the absence of pleasure, the tasteless insipidity of unconsciousness: envy brings with it its own punishment; it slowly consumes itself with a combustion not the less certainly destructive, because it is not

demonstrated by light and heat; the pangs of the envious are *intolerable*, and that principally because their torment is unceasing, and they suffer without hope from themselves; with a deeply-felt conviction in their own minds, that they are objects for the universal contempt and dislike of their fellow-men; and that they incur the wrath of a great and holy God: "for wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one." Job v. 2. "A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones." Proverbs xiv. 30. "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but *who* is able to stand before *envy?*" Proverbs xxvii. 4.

Did we require a farther confirmation of the malignity of envy, and of the dreadful consequences to which it leads, than that which is constantly before us in the world; were it not sufficient to cast abroad our eyes into the immediate circle of our friends to perceive its hateful influence; did not almost every day occasion some degree of suffering from this passion, as when we become the objects of envy to others, or when we commune with our own hearts, and find that we are also more or less the subjects of this evil passion; did not the history of mankind in every age exhibit the fell influence of this fiend-like motive; did not reason and religion equally proclaim their aversion from its power; we should still find it powerfully drawn in the history of the "patriarchs who moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt," where the passion may

be traced from its first excitement to its consummation in the highest crimes: or still further, we may follow its development in the life, and trial, and passion of our blessed Lord himself, the victim of concurrent hatred and envy, for "he knew that for envy they had delivered him:" (Matthew xxvii. 18.) so thoroughly has this malignant principle shewn its evil disposition from the earliest periods down to the present hour; "for where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work." James iii. 16.

Yet strange to say, in spite of all these warnings, of the consciousness of evil, and of its attendant misery, "the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy:" (James iv. 5.) it is a perennial fountain from which flow the bitter waters of sin and sorrow, remorse and wo; and yet they continue to flow onward; wave succeeds wave, and day follows day in the same unwearied course of sinfulness and wretchedness; every good resolution formed in our own strength is overwhelmed, and the spirit that dwelleth in us still lusteth to envy; until the love of God, and of his creatures, supplant the love of the world, and the desire after its riches, and honours, and pleasures, praise, and vanities! So that from the earliest to the latest hour of existence, it requires constant vigilance to detect, firmness to resist, and grace to oppose it; for by the communication of this latter influence alone, can we hope to be successful in subduing its constantly baneful agency.

Envy and hatred are so nearly allied, that in

all probability the former will scarcely ever be found to exist, except in combination with the latter: there is, however, this difference, that envy is always unjust and malignant, because it is levelled against merit and virtue, or rather against the respect and consideration which attaches to their exercise; while hatred *may* be directed against wickedness, and against the workers of iniquity: the *one may* perchance be usefully applied, the other never can; the *one may* partake of some good, the other is unmixedly evil. There is also in envy some kind of affinity with ambition; but even here too, under the influence of divine teaching, *ambition* admits of being employed in the pursuit of some good, in the fervent desire after heavenly wisdom; but *envy* scarcely ever wishes for the possession of the good qualities of its object, and certainly never for their own sake; it is a feeble, it is an impotent imitation; it is a base counterfeit, without even the pretension of accuracy in the copy, or of cunning in the design of its deception.

Such, then, is envy! What are the duties of the christian parent with regard to it? Not only to repress it with her utmost care, but to stifle its birth, and arrest its first and feeblest tendencies; and above all, to encourage principles which will animate the heart with other impulses, and fortify it against its secret insinuations. How, then, are these objects to be accomplished?

First, by inculcating and educing moderate and suitable desires, since where these only exist

there will be a state of contentment and thankfulness for present good; and a quiet trust in God, for all which may be necessary and really beneficial for us; which will supersede the tendency to no apparent boons which are not vouchsafed to us; and which will teach us, that he alone is the happy man whose wants are few, whose desires are circumscribed, whose wishes are exhausted by what it has pleased his heavenly Father to bestow, and who does not covet the fancied goods of others.

Secondly, by teaching the wisdom and justice of God, and the equity of his government, and the equalized diffusion of happiness and misery throughout the domain of his rational creatures, though that equality may not be always visible to us, because we see only the exterior, and it is the heart alone which knoweth its own bitterness.

Thirdly, by actively fulfilling the duties of the station which has been assigned to us by Providence; filling up the measure of our days, by doing what God enjoins, and suffering what *he* appoints; and *so* actively devoting ourselves to *his* work, and to the immediate calls upon our own exertions, that there will be no room to envy others.

Fourthly, by developing the passion of emulation, and by studying to imitate the virtues of those high and holy characters, which have been left us as examples of resignation under suffering, fortitude in adversity, modesty and humility in

prosperity, meekness in contumely, and patience in misfortune, since each one of these will prove antidotes to envy, and be the surest safeguards against that state of listlessness and lukewarmness, which exposes us to the incursion of the temptations to this passion: and

Lastly, by avoiding the stimulus of praise, honour, glory, and reputation as motives to action; motives of a more than doubtful character; motives which impugn the love of virtue for itself; and which teach the young heart to palpitate after distinction rather than worth, the praise of men rather than the approbation and favour of the Most High, the honour of contemporaries rather than the glory of God.

Section V. *Of Benevolence.*

After contemplating the painful passion to which the attention has been so recently directed, it is quite a relief to turn the eye to one of the very few verdant spots, which still remain in the trackless desert of our fallen nature; and although upon a closer inspection, we may find, that even this hallowed space has not escaped the desolating blast of sin, but that the seeds of evil propensity grow and flourish, and exhibit their power and influence; yet the traveller through life, will delight to rest there, and will rejoice that such a scene of comparative fertility can be presented to his view.

The exercise of benevolence is necessary to the existence and support of the social compact: it is the essential bond of union, which links man with his fellow-man; which teaches him to look beyond his own wants and desires, and not only to consider the views, and wishes, and feelings of others; but also to weigh well, how the former may operate upon the latter, and always to yield the one in favour of the other, where the joint existence of the two is incompatible.

The first principle on which benevolence rests is *disinterestedness*. It is not *selfish*, or why does it select as its favoured objects, individuals who are feeble and without support, from whom no return except that of gratitude *can* be expected; the poor, the sick, the sorrowful, and the dying; individuals who have no other claim to notice than their poverty and misery—nay, even those who are very generally characterized, by attributes which are repugnant to our feelings and prejudices; rather than those whose situation in society gives them an opportunity of exercising a reciprocity of kind offices, or repaying kindness by kindness, attention by attention, charity by charity? Why, but because sordid interest has not, or at least ought not to have any influence upon this principle; why, but because it is intended to counterbalance selfishness, to form a safeguard for man's mutual existence, to prepare an antidote to his sorrows, to preserve a source of supply for his necessities, to alleviate his cares, to form a solace for his distresses, a means of re-

paration for his losses, and a balm for all the misery and wo, which are in the world through sin. Lamentable indeed is the consideration, that this principle is so seldom to be met with, that it is so frequently perverted, so often misapplied, obscured by prejudice and passion, chilled by the baneful influence of selfish feeling, repressed by ingratitude, stifled by the usages of society, and stunted by disappointment.

Yet in educating this passion, it should be clearly laid down as a principle, that its cherished abode will ever be the hut of the destitute and the miserable; its chief objects the widow and the orphan, the friendless outcast from society, the houseless wanderer, the indigent in every aggravated form of destitution; and that its exercise should be principled, independent of any hope of reward, except that which arises from the consciousness of doing good: that it is to be cherished for its own sake, and that of others, and not for the good which it may devolve on its agent: and that it is to pursue its object steadily, undaunted by difficulty, unsubdued by indifference, unattainted by neglect, unenfeebled by ingratitude; but rather stimulated to its highest exertion by this very circumstance, from the deeply-felt conviction, how much the exertion of the principle is needed, and especially in the form of its dearest object, the instruction of the ignorant, reclaiming the vicious, and leading the unprincipled to consider their ways and be wise.

It is of great importance, that the *passion* of

benevolence, should be grounded on the principled desire of doing good to others; not that it should be carelessly left to circumstances to develop as a matter of feeling; it can *then* never be relied upon, for it would lose its attribute of disinterestedness, and become selfish; the mere gratification of an impulse, produced by the contemplation of other's suffering, and lasting only so long as the object is before us. But benevolence marches out for its objects, and does not trust to chance to produce them. Neither does it confine itself to the relief of sorrow: there are daily and hourly occasions for its exercise, in sparing the feelings of those around us, contributing to their happiness and comfort, and saving them from pain and uneasiness. Without these unostentatious pursuits it will be little worth; it will degenerate into the mere excitement of sympathy and charity, the policy of weak and little minds, and will be employed rather as the means of administering to our own comfort, than to that of others. But we need not look abroad for objects of benevolent purpose; they are to be found at home, and in the family circle. It is a favourite adage, and most true, that charity should begin at home, but then it should *not end there;* it is a diffusive principle, which is not only to be extended to parents, children, relatives, and friends, but to the whole human race: for it is to be assumed as another principle of benevolence, that it *can* only be perfect as it is *entire, diffusive, universal;* and that it can only be *entire*

as it is complete in all its parts: the general passion must be composed of *all* the several exertions it has made, and of *every* occasion for its exercise.

Again, benevolence must be *just* and equitable; individual happiness can only be safely procured or enjoyed, as it may be compatible with the general welfare of families, societies, and of mankind at large: this must never be sacrificed for any temporary object, or for any *limited* number of suffering individuals. Genuine benevolence considers the good of *all* around, and does not seek its own gratification, or that of its peculiar objects, until it has considered, if this can be obtained, without involving a sacrifice of happiness or comfort from some *larger* section of the family of man, and when this is the case, it ceases to be based on its only solid support, *good-will to man*, not as an individual, but as a species.

Notwithstanding all these circumstances, benevolence is not entirely devoid of selfishness; for there is some kind of expectation of return, either in reciprocal good offices, or in the thanks of the obliged, or in the gratitude of the relieved; it is only our almighty Parent who is susceptible of a benevolence towards his creatures, which at the same time knows no bounds, and from which there is no hope of *return*.

One of the finest attributes of benevolence, is to be tender and compassionate towards the er-

rors, and forgiving to the faults of those with whom we stand associated. Firm to its own *principles*, it is liberal to the views and feelings of others; and while it cherishes a devoted attachment to the convictions of its own judgment, it is anxious to leave the opinions of its neighbour unbiassed, not to claim for itself, the exclusive privilege of judging correctly, but to allow that it *may* err; and although it conscientiously believes that it *does not*, yet it willingly allows that it may be wrong, and cherishes at all events a prevalent feeling of the right of private judgment in others. And it *does more:* for while it exercises liberality, it forgives the want of the exercise of this principle towards its own views and feelings; it delights to pass over that which is wrong: "hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth sin." Proverbs x. 12. "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love." Proverbs xvii. 19. But while it rejoices to overlook that which is wrong, and to conceal it with a veil of charity, benevolence is not unmindful of the *real interests* of its objects; it does not forget that error cannot be innocuous, and that it should be corrected where it is possible; but in its efforts to accomplish this, it is influenced by a meek, gentle, unobtrusive spirit, which is grieved to wound, and rejoices at the same instant to apply a healing balm; and in imitation of its great exemplar, not to "break the bruised reed," or "quench the smoking flax." In conducting the steps of this process, unity and

simplicity of design, and singleness of heart characterize its progress; and then it will be found, that open rebuke is better than "secret love." "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Proverbs xxvii. 5, 6. "Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee." Proverbs ix. 8.

Again, the influence of benevolence leads to contentment and hospitality; contentment with our own simple fare, and the desire to share it with those who need, or others who are connected with us in the bonds of friendship or society. "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith." Proverbs xv. 17. So just is it that the offering of benevolence which springs from the heart, will find its way to the heart; and while it diffuses the glow of serenity over its origin, will descend in copious blessings upon the life.

But benevolence is a still higher principle: it is the accomplishment of duty; heaven-born; and however marred by its association with humanity, has not lost its upward tendency, and still seeks the throne of God, whence it originated. Thus, "to love the Lord thy God with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark xii. 33. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Ro-

mans xiii. 10. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Leviticus xix. 18. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart." 1. Peter i. 22. "If any man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." 1 John 4, 20. Thus, clearly defined are the limits of christian benevolence; thus is it constituted a duty of the highest order; thus does it teach us to watch over, and guard, and consult, and cherish the interests, and the feelings of others; thus does it place them on a *level* with *ourselves,* and it is well known there is no lack of selfishness in the world; thus does it enjoin us to employ all the powers of the mind and body in the love and service of God, a part of which, is to be constantly doing good to others: and thus does it enforce sincerity and purity of heart, and motive, and design, in cultivating the principle into earnest *desire,* and the *desire* into passion.

The exterior of benevolence is prepossessing: the contentment and charity, the wish to do good to others, to think well of them, and to put a favourable construction upon their actions and motives, diffuse a peace over the heart which is visible in the countenance, whose expression is therefore characterized by mildness and animation: witness the unruffled features, lighted up by the glow of hope, the unwrinkled brow, the expanded forehead, the sympathetic eye of the philanthropist,all expressing the joy and serenity of the soul, the joy of anticipated useful-

ness, the serenity of reflection on the success of past efforts, or at least in the sincerity of their design for ameliorating, instructing, or comforting the wretched, the ignorant, and the sorrowing. But alas! *a smile* is not always the infallible indication of *benevolence;* and there is abundant room for the operation of the apostolic injunction, "let love be without dissimulation;" (Romans xii. 9.) for the exterior symbols of charity may result only from studied complaisance, and may be merely the offspring of a factitious principle, the base of which rests on hypocrisy; they may be the effect of habit, superinduced for the very purpose of concealing evil dispositions, and of giving their possessor a character in society, to which he has really no substantial claim. And on the contrary, a grave and serious countenance, rendered so perhaps by the many sad circumstances of life, which however in a well-regulated mind, all tend to soften the heart, and to render it susceptible of sympathy for others; partly also influenced by the physical temperament; partly by early habits of thought and action, and by certain undefinable associations, which it is not always easy to appreciate, but which produce important changes on the general cast of thought and feeling, and therefore on the expression of the countenance; such an expression is by no means incompatible with the most expansive charity, a charity which warms the heart to energy, and engages all the powers of the man, both body and soul, in seeking the good

of others. There is perhaps this difference; there may exist in the one case, more of simple feeling, prompting to the exercise of virtue; and in the other, more of genuine principle, enlisting in its train such a measure of feeling, as may be necessary to support and insure the continuance of seeking to do good. As the basis of the social virtues, it is of great consequence to cultivate this passion in childhood, and to give it a foundation of principles, as well as to fix its attention on the only proper objects of its care.

But a question here presents itself as to the nature of *politeness*, and its connexion with the principle of benevolence. The exterior expressions of the former, are undoubtedly such as arise from the existence of a *supposed interest* in the parties; and the unalloyed principle should consist in the wish to confer happiness on all around, to make them to be at peace and at ease with themselves and others: and hence it is essentially depending upon benevolence. *Politeness* then is the mode of expressing the agency of this passion, and the desire we possess of securing the happiness of its objects. It is the result of civilization, and should form the bond of union for society. But, unfortunately, it is too frequently the indication of a sentiment which does not exist, the imitation of a principle which is not felt, a moral counterfeit, which is only the more baneful because there is a tacit agreement among mankind, not to detect and expose the spurious metal, but rather to give it currency, and to coun-

tenance its circulation by resolving to receive and pay it in the room of, if not as an equivalent for, the sterling coin. The insincerity of the world is a matter of notoriety; and yet with this conviction upon our mind, we are flattered and cajoled by its attentions; we are blinded, if not duped by its fair speeches; and we are lulled into the quiet calm of listless indolence by the *apparent interest* it takes in all our concerns, forgetting that that interest will be blown aside by the first sigh of the spirit of self-denial; or by the most distant murmuring of the storm of passion, or the tempest of conflicting interest. *Politeness,* as an object of education, is to be cultivated on the principle of benevolence; while the civilities of the world are to be received with caution: for painful as it is to a generous mind to indulge a fear of insincerity, yet it is not the less necessary to secure it from reposing its confidence where it will be abused, and to teach it the importance of hesitating untried acquaintance, and of forming judicious friendships.

There is a possibility of *too much openness,* a species of false candour, the absence of all reserve, which exposes the incautious though wayfaring traveller through life, to innumerable mortifications, in consequence of others availing themselves of this openness to convert it to their own base purposes, and as an engine to be employed against the individual's peace. This unreserve is not to be met by the development of its opposite, but by the employment of that steady

caution, which while it pursues the right course, is still wary of committing itself to others, and thus forms the retiring character, remarkable for its solidity, but not deficient in energy when roused to action. It is painful to the benevolent mind, to be compelled to suspect the possibility of evil intention in the soft intercourse of politeness; but it is the only means of escaping the misery of being betrayed, and of avoiding the ingratitude of false friends. Such is the fondness of the human heart for calumny, and so easy is it to misrepresent and to distort the feelings and motives of the man, when they have been presented without particular attention and preceding consideration, that care should be taken not to trust those whom we have not previously tried, and who may not have proved themselves trustworthy. But we must pity where we cannot confide, and diligently seek the improvement and the good of those, whose sense of right will very generally yield to the attraction of compliment, that unmeaning expression which is often used as an artifice to conceal some base design; to call off its object from itself; to fill its attention with absurd and unmeaning follies, and then to take advantage of the silly vanity it has produced, in order to accomplish its own interested purposes. Children should be particularly guarded against this empty and irrational habit, which really detracts from the value of the gentleman, is beneath the dignity of man, sets most awkwardly upon the rational and the edu-

cation, but is most unseemly for the Christian, offensive to God, and opposed to the high principles which ought to constitute the rule of our conduct.

While however we are assailed on the one hand by a counterfeit benevolence, we are often placed in contact with those who do not assume even the mask of politeness, and who repay the exercise of charity with ingratitude; not only with those who really want the *principle* of love to their fellow men, as well as its shadowy form under which many have taken shelter, but who are positively malevolent, and indulge *evil will* against such as are liberal and good; they cannot brook a feeling of obligation for kindness received, or the idea that they are necessitous, especially if the benevolent principle shall have assumed the form of instruction, particularly religious instruction, warning or advice; and for all this the young should be prepared, that they may watch over their own hearts, and not be lightly moved away from the firmness of benevolent purpose by these lighter oppositions; by having their good evil spoken of; or by finding that they do not obtain the applause due to their conduct. *Merit, not praise*, must be their object; to do the will of God, not to obtain the approbation of man; to fill the station of an heir of immortality, not to be satisfied with the fleeting gratifications of the present world. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your

Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, *they have their reward.* But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." Matthew vi. 1—4.

They in whom the principle of benevolence is wanting, are either diseased or defective; they are minus in the full development of their intellectual powers; or they have been rendered selfish by the long continued irritation of bodily infirmity; or they are the victims of a far more fearful malady, even the disease of sin, which has crept into every corner of the heart, and perverted all the manifestations of mind; "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it." Isaiah i. 5, 6. And this is the real explanation, why so much malevolence in every hateful form is to be found in the world; why slander, detraction, and calumny are so frequently met with; why envy and jealousy rankle in the bosom; why harshness, and unkindness, and contempt so often assail us; why the eye does not look on the wretched to compassionate them, and the heart is not moved to pity; why duplicity and insincerity, and selfish interest so commonly intercept

our progress; why the shaft of ridicule is so frequently aimed against the just; and injustice and ingratitude possess their day of power, and almost forget that there is a to-morrow, a day of reckoning and retribution, a day, when all hearts will be laid open, and all will be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

But there is an unfortunate result attendant upon the frequency with which these fatal evils await us, and it *is this;* the heart which is expanded with early love to others, which beats with large desire to do good, and to diffuse happiness, and to think well of its neighbours, and to esteem them highly, and to place confidence in their uprightness, and just intention, and to think and to believe ill of no man; yet commerce with the world nips this youthful ardour, chills the effort of benevolence by repeated disappointment —contracts the heart by contact with the cold and heartless selfishness of others—induces distrust by the suffering experienced from having been deceived, and by witnessing the inconsistencies even of *the good*, and by observing that in *any others* unimpeachable uprightness is the waking dream of unsuspecting rectitude of intention. The effect of all this is to develop a degree of caution, which hesitates to take *for granted* the worth of its fellow men, and waits to prove their character, and to try their principles before it trusts its own welfare in their hands. Painful, though the consideration may be, this caution is necessary in the present state of society. But

then unfortunately it does not rest here; that which might have been advantageously employed as a measure of *precaution only*, is adopted as a principle of action; the mind broods over the miserable condition of society; it becomes aware of the little dependence that can be placed on the help of man; it suffers from injustice; it finds its confidence betrayed, its interests sacrificed to any selfish consideration, its friendships misplaced, its estimate of character falsified, its esteem engaged by unworthy objects, and by them thrown away as worthless; it becomes melancholy from such a detail of practical misery, and falls into hypochondriasis, or misanthropy, according to the prevailing physical temperament, and the principal characteristic of its preceding modes and habits of thought and feeling; suspicion and distrust exert their baneful influence over the mind, and by degrees, friendship and love, purity of motive, rectitude of action, esteem, respect, and consideration are all treated as mere illusions, from the deceitful influence of which *they* have escaped; an escape on which they congratulate themselves.

The truths of religion are the only sure antidote to this state of mind; by them it will be led to the cause of all this misery; by them it will learn its own proneness to evil, and that it is only preserved by the influence of divine grace; by them it will be taught to pity instead of resenting, and to forgive instead of seeking to return evil for evil, or even punishment for evil;

and thus again will it be brought round to the exercise of the principle of benevolence—that charity which can find no substitute in literary acquisition, and philosophical knowledge, or biblical learning, or devotional lore; that charity which must be a fruit of faith, and without which true faith can have no existence; that charity which consists not in simply feeding the hungry, or relieving the distressed, clothing the poor, administering to the wretched, healing the sick, or succouring the destitute; a principle which never fails under the most unpropitious circumstances, but remains as a ground of action, "which suffereth long and is kind; which envieth not; which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." 1 Corinthians xiii. 4—7.

From this parent stock of benevolence, flow many of the blessings of society, the sweets of friendship, the delights of love, the endearments of relationship. We have already sketched, as far as our present design will permit, the influence of conjugal, parental, and filial affection; and in a future stage of our inquiry, the subjects of friendship and society will pass under review, so that we shall now direct our attention very shortly, to the nearest associated passion, viz. jealousy.

Section VI. *Of Jealousy.*

It has been supposed, that the passion of jealousy arose from, and was an evidence of intense affection; and as such, it has been often palliated, excused, and almost vindicated. But this is a most mistaken notion; trace the operation of the principle, and watch its origin, and it will be found incompatible with the existence of perfect love.

The influence of jealousy is very early discernible in the young mind; and even the nursery is not exempted from its inroads. It consists in this feeling; a fear lest others should possess a greater share in the returns of affection, than we ourselves; or lest these returns should be unequal to the love we bear and manifest towards others. In either of these cases, it must be seen that want of confidence, distrust, and a consequent loss of respect, and esteem, are the sources from which these exhibitions of jealousy must flow. But it has been before shewn, that confidence, ingenuousness, respect, and esteem, are *necessary* to the production, and continuance of love; and if these be *indispensable ingredients* in the formation of affection, it follows, that *their opposite principles* cannot be received as evidence of the intensity, the highest, and most perfect state of the passion. The conclusion is absurd:

and let no one palliate to himself the existence of jealousy, or rather encourage its development on this ground; or he will harbour in his bosom a serpent, whose sting will never be extracted, whose poison will circulate through every part of the character, and will influence every act and thought, will be brought into activity by the slightest circumstance, and will descend to those "trifles light as air," which to the jealous, are invested with a sacredness and certainty, that no argument can dissipate; and which are confirmed by time, and deepened by opposition, and augmented by suspicion, and magnified by distrust, and realized by passion.

The first influence of jealousy may be traced in children; and in their minds, is most intimately associated with envy, a principle with which it is at all times very nearly allied. Thus it will often arise from one infant possessing a toy, or any other mark of favour, which the other *has not;* it will first feel the passion of *envy* for the valuable good, whatever it may be, and this will eventually lead to jealousy of the individual, who has vouchsafed the boon! This feeling which in its early stage, is only occasionally excited, will by frequent repetition become habitual; and habit will ripen into passion. The child in whom jealousy has been once powerfully excited, will be ever on the watch for food, to nourish its malignant principle: and occasions for its exercise will not long be wanting, since it is at once ungenerous and unjust, and therefore frames to

itself a source of suspicion in the very good qualities and good conduct of its compeers. This passion having taken deep root in the mind, the child suffers a marked diminution of affection for its associates, who have become the objects of jealousy; love to its parents is supplanted by a sense of injury, a doubt of their affection, a distrust in the equity of their decisions, and a carelessness of compliance with their wishes; the bond of relationship is severed; the unity of the social compact is destroyed; every evil passion is fostered; the influence of paternal government is lost; the hopes of education are blasted; the growth of the moral virtues is repressed; the influence of religion over the conduct is supplanted; the heart is occupied by a demon before whose sway reason and intellect, judgment and reflection, duty and conscience are laid prostrate and enslaved; and it has become the miserable victim of a passion which knows no bounds; under whose influence, truth and justice, prudence, reputation, gratitude, the hope of worldly success, the motives of benevolence, the love of esteem, the claims of pity, and the laws of God, all, all, are yielded to falsehood and artifice, the most cruel injustice, the imprudence of infatuation, the love of revenge, the basest ingratitude, the gratification of a blind passion, the dictates of selfishness, the luxury of malice, the whisper of hatred, the unpitying demands of that passion, which is cruel, and which in the full tide of its headlong course, is arrested by no barrier human

or divine, but seeks to confound all it knows and once loved, in one common ruin here and hereafter. There is no peace to the bosom of the jealous man; he is tormented by a fire that is not quenched, by the worm that never dieth; his bosom burns by its own combustion; and he carries about with him feelings of inexpressible agony, which none can thoroughly appreciate. For "jealously is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame." Solomon's Song, viii. 6. "Jealousy is the rage of a man; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance." Proverbs vi. 34. "And who is able to stand before jealousy." Proverbs xxvii. 4.

So vehement is this passion, that the integrity of the brain often suffers as its consequence, and insanity is the result; a form of maniacal hallucination not very uncommon, and which has often led to the most desperate catastrophe. Would that we could consider all these results as maniacal: the mind would indeed rest on a little sphere of hope, which would throw a gleam of sunshine over futurity, and dispel the thick gloom which awaits the closing up of the earthly career of such wretched beings. But what must that passion be, which at its height involves the sacrifice of temporal and eternal good, present character, the ties of blood, the institutions of society, the appointments of heaven, the injunctions of the Most High; and in whose train are to be seen anger, hatred, malice, revenge, insanity, murder,

suicide? What must that passion be, which degrades the man, destroys the Christian's hope, annihilates the christian temper, and consigns the individual to the gloomy precincts of a lunatic asylum here; to the still narrower, and more chilly separation of a cheerless grave, or to the darkness which may be felt of a hopeless eternity? How important is it to avoid exciting this passion in the young, to check it in embryo, to develop principle as its antidote, and to fortify the mind against its encroachments by educating christian hopes, and christian precepts, and christian consolation, and christian anticipations, as those objects alone which are to be sought, to be obeyed, to be enjoyed, to be struggled for with vehement intense desire!

Section VII. *Of Pity.*

Pity is a sympathetic affection of the heart, directed with more or less of energy towards all those who are suffering or unfortunate: it is the counterpoise of selfishness, the parent of compassion, the associate of feeling, the handmaid of charity; it is nature's appointed channel, through which the pang of suffering is to be relieved, and the cry of the destitute is to be heard, and the tear of the mourner is to be wiped away.

Pity is not the result of reason and reflection, but an instinctive love for our fellow-creatures;

a natural recoil from suffering of every kind; a desire to alleviate the sorrows, and augment the joys of our fellow-men. It is a spontaneous movement of the soul; and where reason has been sophisticated, and the memory of personal sorrows has been obliterated, and the sobriety of reflection has never existed, and habit has obscured the perception of suffering, even here pity occupies the heart, and renders man compassionate in spite of himself: the suffering of an animal, the idea of its death, the termination of its circumscribed pleasures, the manner of its dissolution, will excite that painful feeling which prompts to alleviate its distress, and to save it from destruction: how much more, then, ought the principle to be aroused by a *tale of woe*—and *à fortiori*, by the *contemplation* of suffering humanity; by the sight of real distress; by the cottage of indigence, undefended from the rude blast of winter; by the miserable pallet of sickness occupied by a wretched being; ignorant as wretched; rapidly hastening to the goal of life, through a lengthened series of pain, almost realizing the pang of dissolution; but with this aggravation, that to him death is not the termination of being, but the mere change which conducts the child of mortality to that world where his eternal destiny is irrevocably fixed. Sorrow, suffering, disease, pain, poverty, indigence, wretchedness, ignorance, and sin; the misery of to-day, and the uncertainty of to-morrow's hope; the sufferings of sickness, and the slow extinction of life, the blindness of the

understanding, the aversion of the affections from God, the hardness of the heart, the gloom of obstinacy, the hopeless anticipation of an asylum in the grave, without a rational prospect of peace and happiness beyond it; these are motives to pity! And yet this feeling does not result, as it has been supposed by some philosophers, from a law of association, by which the individual is enabled to place himself in the circumstances of the sufferer, who excites his compassion, or in any imaginary situation of distress. This dogma is an offset from that sweeping conclusion which would resolve every social feeling and passion into an effort of self-love: but the truth is, that the all-bountiful Creator has not formed man in such a simple mould; he is not a Polype, the first step of animal existence—one simple structure of a similar kind, but *like* his animal frame, complicated by a great variety of organs, suited to their several functions, and each in its own order, forming a grand harmony of created perfection; so are the manifestations of his mind multiplied and associated, and each adapted to the exigencies of his situation, his relations here, his hopes hereafter.

Of these manifestations, pity forms an independent passion; and he who has attended to the operation of his own mind, or to that of children, will have traced its development without the intervention of any ratiocinative or imaginative process, upon the simple application of its appropriate stimulus, viz. misfortune, the sight of which

has as instantaneously developed the feeling of pity, and the desire to relieve the sufferer, as the sight of food has stimulated the appetite of hunger, and aroused the desire to appease its cravings. The processes are similar; but the one is purely animal, the other purely mental; and under the shield of this tutelary passion, nature has placed all the unfortunate of the earth. The most illustrious instances of pity are to be found in the character of our Saviour, in whom it would be absurd to suppose the operation of the associated principle above mentioned; yet Jesus wept over the grave of Lazarus; and whatever might have been the immediate cause of those tears, it was divine compassion filled his bosom, and gave rise to the miracle he then wrought, without the possibility of *being*, or of supposing himself to be, in a similar situation.

In its exercise, pity is not always just, or proportioned to the degree of misfortune which excites it: a thousand causes operate to disturb the attention; a thousand prejudices distort the reason; selfish motives prevent its agency, becloud the understanding, and obstruct the will; one object possesses a greater number of amiable traits, and is therefore more attractive than another equally distressed, and equally deserving, whose exterior may be forbidding, whose manner may be repulsive, or with whom there may be a scantier excitement of sympathy. Pity will sometimes be exhausted upon the most trifling sorrows, while the weighter evils that surround shall pass

unheeded, unnoticed, unrelieved. It may exist as a mere sentiment, and will *not* prompt the relief of its object; hence the importance of educating the principle, developing the passion, placing it on proper objects, leading it to its legitimate consequences, and divesting it of the operation of those causes which would impede its action, or impair its simplicity and integrity.

For the relief of suffering, nature has not calculated on the voice of reason, which she has deemed insufficient, and which would have been but seldom heard; she has not calculated on the simple desire to do good, to fulfil the royal law, to do the will of God, to imitate the Saviour; motives, which in their operation are all equally precarious, and therefore she has most wisely implanted pity in the bosom of man, and has constituted it a passion from whose *real* exercise *pleasure* is to be constantly derived. So manifest and so powerful is this connexion between the object of distress, the tear of pity, and the outstretched arm of compassion, that its *artificial* excitement has become a positive object of literature, and too frequently a substitute for the charities of home, of kindred, and of society, for all the sympathies of real sorrow, and vulgar distress, and every day misfortune, the misery of the hovel, and the sinfulness of man. Thus the tears of pity shall be poured forth in profusion, for the counterfeit calamities of the drama: we may weep over the feigned distress of the heroine of a novel; and the poor, and the sick, and the dying

of our immediate neighbourhood, shall pass without a tear, without relief, or with only a customary offering, doled out without feeling by a niggard hand, and distributed through the agency of a menial. And shall this ever be? or shall we return to the influence of common sense, reason and religion, preserve our tears for those who really need them, abstract our minds from counterfeit distress, dismiss these inenergetic good wishes and heartless offerings, and exercise the genuine principle of pity, by seeking out distress, carrying ourselves the balm of consolation where most needed, witnessing its application, and giving it efficacy by that kindness, which can only be exercised by those who feel, and by those who feel *not* for the mere enjoyment of feeling, but as a motive to action, action of the highest and the purest character. Here then is an important object in education, to avoid the excitement of unreal sympathy and ineffective pity, and to develop the passion on the principled basis of seeking to alleviate the *sorrow of others*, not to minister to our own gratification.

As in the employment of real pity, a high degree of pleasure will be produced, *first*, from the excitation of feeling, and next from the consciousness of doing good, and alleviating sorrow; so pain arises from refusing to listen to its promptings; the mind suffers from self-reproach; and the conviction of having turned away from the complaint of poverty, the tear of distress, or the accents of mourning, will occasion an *uneasy feel-*

ing, which upon reflection will be discovered to consist in the upbraidings of stifled pity, aggravated by the monitions of conscience, which inform us, that reason and religion, as well as passion, have been resisted, and that we have forgotten one of the highest privileges of our nature, as well as forsaken one of its most important duties; an obvious ground for educating this principle in earliest infancy, calling it into action upon every just occasion, and invariably associating the attempt to relieve suffering of every kind, wherever presented, and under all circumstances, with the actions and the pleasures of every day.

This principle should be carried into the conduct of children with regard to the brute creation; the attribute of mercy must be stamped upon their character, and cruelty must be abhorred: they must not be suffered to torment domestic animals, but taught to treat them kindly; they must not be permitted to sport with the life and sufferings of flies, or other insects, and above all to take pleasure in their distress: they should not be suffered to *witness* even the *necessary* and most merciful infliction of death, lest their sympathy with pain should be diminished, and the edge of their compassion blunted by contact with cruelty. It will be absurd to expect merciful, and just, and tender-hearted, and pitiful men and women, from children, whose earliest associations are on the side of inhumanity, and who are permitted to form their very pleasures from the sufferings of

the creatures over which they have power. For a similar reason, they must be taught to respect the feelings, and to be thankful for the services of their attendants, to pity their servitude, to be grateful for their own privileges, and to avoid giving pain or unnecessary trouble to those around them.

Pity is not only excited by the language of complaint, but also simply by the sight of tears, even although the occasion for their production has been a tale of fictitious distress; it is less easily aroused by bodily pain, than mental suffering; it is more active in youth, more operative in manhood, and loses its energy in declining years, in proportion as the selfishness of old age accumulates; and as the feelings become less active, and the bodily powers are exhausted, and man draweth towards the close of his career: it is likewise more easily excited, more permanently influential, of a firmer character, less easily perverted from its purpose, and more steadily pursuing its settled objects in females than in males. The *benevolence of man* may be inoperative; it may be chilled by selfishness; it may be perverted by prejudice; it may be arrested by avarice; it may be distorted by falsehood; it may be impaired by fear; it may be supplanted by business; it may be superseded by anger; it may be destroyed by idleness; it may be drowned in intemperance; it may be wasted by ridicule; it may be defeated by ingratitude; it may be obscured by impatience; or perverted by injust-

ice: but the *pity of woman*, when based on principle, is indestructible; it survives every effort to repress it; it lives through the storm of passion; and is still seen after many days, buffeting with the waves of opposition, and pursuing its undaunted voyage to the haven of successful charity.

Pity however is not a blind and headlong passion, which bears away before it, the influence of reason: and although it may not be always *proportioned* to the degree of misfortune which excites it, yet it is generally distributed according to a certain measure of ideal justice. Thus, for instance, it is more readily excited in favour of *worthy objects*, on account of the unfortunate rather than the wicked; towards those who are suffering from the hand of Providence, rather than those who are bearing the punishment of their sins. This however is not invariably the case; for there are some good men, who are equally moved by the sight of *misery*, in whatever shape it may be presented; and there are others who wish to be stimulated by the most aggravated forms of wretchedness, that they may enjoy the intellectual luxury of pity, without much discrimination as to the cause which excites it, or much solicitude for its removal.

In the education of this passion, there is here some degree of difficulty to encourage the active exertions of pity, without confounding the essential distinctions between vice and virtue: to sym-

pathize with the misery entailed by the former, without feeling a diminished horror for its cause; to seek to relieve the enslaved, without acquiring a familiarity with their chain, which may render us less reluctant to yield to its ensnaring influence. Yet the difficulty is easily obviated, and may be made an instrument of good, if while the passion be directed towards the miserable, the young are instructed, into the fearful consequences of that sin which has introduced sorrow into the world, and without which it would have had no existence. It is not contended that *no* distinction should be made between the wretched from misfortune, and the destitute from vice: we pity and seek to relieve both; but we only sympathize with the former. It is not for us to judge: this is the attribute of omniscience; but it is for us to shew pity, which is an attribute of mercy, and tempers even justice with its mild radiance. Our adorable Redeemer lost not a particle of his dignity by healing those whose diseases were the consequences of vice, by becoming the guest of sinners, by forgiving sins, or by receiving the returns of affection and gratitude from those who loved much, because they had been much forgiven.

The sacred character of Christ will be a better guide, than our shortsighted judgment, as to the proper limits of pity; and the revelation of his will, will be a more suitable last appeal, in every case of doubt, than any notions of expediency or

propriety, with which our own selfish and deceitful hearts may seek to clog the exercise, and defeat the purposes of heaven-born pity. For "he hath not dealt with *us* according to our sins, nor rewarded *us* according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Psalm ciii. 10—14.

There is a fine rebuke to those who would draw closely the limits of pity; who would place it on a basis of feeling, and selfish feeling, rather than on the greatness of the calamity, and the fearful consequences attendant upon it; who would be more affected by a personal or relative loss, than by the degradation and awful prospects of those who lie in the bond of iniquity, contained in the history of Jonah, who is thus reproved by the voice of the Most High: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle (Jonah iv. 10, 11): a plain proof that ignorance and wickedness are not barriers to the mercy of God;

and that even the cattle are not overlooked, when he turneth away his fierce anger, that his creatures perish not.

Again, what is the character of the Most High God, but that "being *full of compassion*, he forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again." Psalm lxxviii. 38. "Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." Psalm lxxxvi. 15. "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion." Psalm cxi. 4. "He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous." Psalm cxii. 4. "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Psalm cxlv. 8, 9.

What were the characteristics of our Saviour's ministry on earth, but that "when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." Matthew ix. 36. "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick." Matthew xiv. 14. "And Jesus moved with compassion towards him, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean." Mark i. 41. "And Jesus, when he came out,

saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things." Mark vi. 34.

What were our Saviour's directions with respect to the exercise of pity? "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?" Matthew xviii. 32, 33.

Once more, what were the objects of his compassion? even temporal wants, (Matthew xv. 32.) the forgiveness of offences, (Ibid. xviii. 33.) the healing of sickness and infirmities, (Ibid. xx. 34.) the deliverance from evil spirits, (Mark ix. 22.) recovery from death, (Luke vii. 13.) healing the wounded and giving sight to the blind, (Ibid. x. 33.) the restoration of the repentant prodigal, (Ibid. xv. 20.) the having "compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need." Hebrews iv. 15, 16. "Seeing then, that it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not;" (Lamentations iii. 22.) may we be "all of one mind, having compasion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous;" (1 Peter iii. 8.) for "whoso

hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1 John, iii. 17, 18.

A commentary on the foregoing train of argument, which simply pleads for itself, would be useless; but there are many excuses for evading the active influence of this passion, and of ceasing to be governed by it; of these we can only mention one or two. *Pity* may be enfeebled by ingratitude, and its generous activity blasted by repeated disappointment; hence the importance of educating the passion upon principle. So long as it is a *passion only*, it may be acted upon, perverted, destroyed by counter passion; but when it is exercised as a principle and a duty, it is no longer contemplated as a meritorious act, and deserving of reward; we look not for repayment; our object should be to relieve the distressed, not to be gratified by the incense of obligation; we should not expect gratitude; when we meet with it we should rejoice, not on the ground of self-gratulation, but from the hope that it may originate from a principle of good in the hearts of the obliged; and when we are assailed by ingratitude, we should feel no diminution, but an *increase of our pity*, for how deplorable is *their* state, whose heart is not softened by the visit of mercy, or the consolations of pity. May we look into *our own* hearts, and see if there be no ingratitude *there*,

towards *Him* who hath pitied us, and is daily and hourly doing us good; and then let us not plead the existence of this vice, as a ground for withholding our aid, or as an excuse for indolence in its administration. And besides all this, there is a promise of eventual good to the compassionate, for "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will *he* pay him again; (Prov. xix. 17.) not probably in the same measure of relief, but in the good he will derive from the exercise of christian virtue; and in those heavenly consolations, with which the darkest hour of distress will be irradiated; and in that presence of the Most High, which is of infinite value to the helpless and sincere inquirer after eternal happiness.

But again, the ardour of pity may be damped by deception. To this, it may be shortly said, that the good are not to want, because we may have been deceived by the bad; and that is bad taste, bad feeling, bad principle, which would withhold relief from the virtuous, because it has been abused by the unprincipled. It is better to be many times deceived, than to refuse the petition of one real sufferer. At the same time, it is to be remarked, that this deception is generally met with only where charity has been indiscriminately bestowed; where it has been lavished on the sturdy impudent mendicant; and where, therefore, the individual exercising pity, has thrown himself in the way of fraud. The artifices practised by street beggars are innumerable;

and that is not pity and charity which consists in their relief, but selfishness, or ostentation, or indolence, or a desire to be relieved from importunity, or motives of a mixed character, but *not pity*. Here indeed, caution should be impressed upon the young mind, that its passions be not excited by this obtrusive display of feigned disease, or produced and productive misery; and lest it should be induced to substitute this lazy pity, this indolent charity, in the room of genuine benevolence. Let it also be recollected, that there are abundant objects of this passion in our own neighbourhood; and that we diminish our power of administering to their necessities, by pampering the vices of the worthless, while we are too apt to feel satisfied with ourselves, and with our claims to philanthropy, on this most insecure and untenable ground.

In conclusion, let it be remarked, that pity is a principle of mental succour, and that the real basis for its exercise will consist in self-denial; and let it be ever borne in mind, that we are only the guardians and stewards of our property; and the almoners of the wretched and the indigent. What God has given us, let it be consecrated to his glory; and every tear which has been wiped away from the furrowed cheek of the wretched, shall be another gem in the crown of Immanuel; of him who had pity on us sinners, and died to redeem us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Before we pass to the consideration of another

passion, we must just add a few words on the influence of grief, not as an *object* of compassion, which has been already considered, but as demanding the vigilance of education from its effect upon the animal machine, and mental manifestations. Grief is occasioned by regret for the past, and generally consists in the deeply felt sense of loss, either by our own folly, or carelessness, or wickedness, or by the appointments of providence. Thus it will be occasioned by the loss of temporal good, of reputation in the sight of mankind, a conscious falling off from the steady consistency of character we may have yet maintained, or the removal of friends or relatives. The age of childhood is not exempt from its influence; for the destruction of a plaything through its own heedlessness or thoughtlessness, the loss of some boon promised to good conduct, and forfeited by the forgetfulness or wilful omission of duty; the withdrawment of parental approbation, the loss of time, and a thousand other sources of regret, give rise to this painful feeling. It is much more prominent in the character of some children than of others: there are those whose buoyant spirits suffer them not to dwell long enough on their little sorrows, to experience grief; there is a *momentary* pang, and it is superseded by some new object of pleasure or pursuit; but there are others, with whom grief is developed by the most trifling occasions, and it remains as an abiding principle; and it is exercised by many circumstances of every day, and the cha-

racter comes to be stamped with its impress; it borders on irritable melancholy; tears and sorrow in every multiplied form are its sad inheritance; pleasure is almost an alien from its bosom; and its life is passed between daily little trials, and augmented regret. It is also occasioned by the contemplation of some desired good, which it hopes not to obtain in consequence of its unwillingness to submit to the measure of privation and exertion necessary to secure it. This regret for the past, does not commonly lead to repentance and amendment: it is not usually a sorrow which softens the heart, and induces it to consider its ways, to ponder the paths of its feet, and to return unto the God of its life: but it absorbs the whole soul into itself, hardens the heart, and alienates it from reflection on the sources of its uneasiness: while it also acts as a load upon the soul, which prevents its laying hold of the hope set before it; a hope which consists in doing and suffering all the appointments of Jehovah; a state of mind which is well exemplified by the conduct of that inquirer after eternal life, who when he was enjoined to sell what he had, and distribute to the poor, that he might have treasure in heaven, and come, and take up his cross, and follow Christ, was "sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions." Mark x. 22. Grief is often produced by the want of fondly desired objects, which a kind providence has thought fit to deny, or which an affectionate parent sees it necessary to withhold. "Wo is

me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing; and I find no rest." But what saith that gracious God? doth he not rebuke the spirit which produced the *grief*, rather than promise to remove it; as, "seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not?" Jeremiah xlv. 3—5. Thus, then, it is a passion to be repressed, when we reason on its origin and tendency; still more so, when we trace its effect; for says the Psalmist, "Mine eye is consumed because of grief." Psalm vi. 7. And most true is it, that the animal machine is slowly wasted by sorrow; destructive, not by the suddenness and intensity of its attack, but enfeebling and undermining the powers of the system by its continuance; and the hollow, sunken, languid, inexpressive eye, is but an indication of the ravages which have been committed, first and chiefly upon the digestive functions. The process of nutrition is interfered with; hence the rapid emaciation and diminished strength; and this disorder of function, when it is prolonged, too commonly terminates in incurable disease of structure.

The combined operation of grief upon the animal and intellectual system, gives rise to that atrophy of the mental manifestations, which is first shewn in disinclination for employment, incapacity of fixing the attention, loss of memory, insurmountable abstraction, uncontrouled wandering of the imagination, profound reverie, disturbed and agitated slumbers, unrefreshing nights, augmenting timidity of character, the desire after

solitude, and a fondness for taciturnity; all these slowly preying upon the mental vigour, and leading to that consumption of brainular energy, which leaves man but the wreck of what he once was; a monument of what it is to want the christian's hope, and the consequent consolation, which forbids the indulgence of grief, and assuages that sorrow which worketh death.

On many occasions grief is not attended by this catalogue of woes; but its *tendency* is always the same, and it is desirable that the full length portrait should be before the parent's eye, or she will not be so thoroughly aware of the *importance* of checking its agency on those slighter occasions, which appear, and indeed are, trifling in themselves, but which become *important* by their *sum;* and still more by their forming the germ of future action and passion, the nucleus around which time and circumstances accumulate opportunity and occasion; these ripening into habit, and habit developing and confirming the operation of principle and passion. Where grief has implanted itself powerfully in the human heart, it is not easy to steer between the mischiefs which result from its indulgence to the full extent of unsubdued inclination, and that too great restraint which doubly loads the bursting heart, and which links in that viscus with the associated morbid actions of the digestive function. A wise parent will allow a moderate course to grief, when the loss which occasions it has been real, and will only then seek to repress its excess: but where its exciting

cause has been the waywardness of passion, the anger of disappointment, the controul of some favourite inclination, the loss of some present object of pursuit, she will struggle against it with all her power, in every form, and under all circumstances. There is no occasion which perhaps more frequently produces grief in children, than the *loss of some ill-starred favourite;* and it is an observation of the truest experience, that favourites are generally unfortunate. It may therefore be worth while to remark, that it will be judicious to avoid the possession of such objects, and then regret for their loss will be superseded. There is one other motive for the line of conduct now recommended, viz. that grief destroys that cheerfulness of character which it is so essential to maintain, as recommendatory to the feelings and principles of the Christian.

Section VIII. *Of Fear.*

Fear stands opposed to courage, and consists in the apprehension of *real* or *supposed* danger, and in a want of the exercise of *power* to seek an acquaintance with the precise nature of the object which inspires terror; to supersede its influence when unreal, and oppose it when just, by means calculated to obviate its baneful tendency. It is a depressing passion, and is more frequently met with in the feeble from disease, the young, the

old, the solitary, and the destitute, than it is with the healthy and robust, in the vigour of maturity, in the prime of manhood, in society, and while enjoying the opportunity of calling in the assistance of others. One and the same cause operates in all these cases, viz. the consciousness of not possessing *power* to resist the approach of danger, and therefore an increasing apprehension of its invasion. A similar reason will account for the greater prevalence of fear during the night, because we possess not the means of calculating the *power* or *the agency* of its objects; and while we invest them with a more extensive influence than they deserve, we feel that we are incapable of appropriating our means of defence, and therefore we are consciously feeble. It must not however be supposed, that fear is the invariable consequence of feeble organization; on the contrary, it will be observed in many instances, that this passion is a stranger to the weak; and examples of heroism have occurred in females, which are not to be paralleled by the stronger sex. Still these are extraordinary cases, and as a general principle, the consciousness of wanting power to resist danger, operates as a predisposition to fear, which may be then easily excited.

Another great source of dread is *ignorance*—ignorance of the nature and qualities of events and circumstances, and of their probable influence over our safety and comfort. It is this which gives to darkness its fear-creating power: *uncertainty* attaches itself to every object which sur-

rounds us; each is invested with a capacity to harm; we remain uninformed by our senses of the nature of occurrences which attend every stage of our progress; each step in advance *may* be towards some object of real terror, and the *probability* of danger is sufficient to awaken fear. In the absence of real knowledge, apprehension is augmented, and prolonged, and even produced by the aid of imagination; and by dwelling intently upon its creations, the simplest impression of want of safety may be converted into absolute terror, which is only the highest degree of this passion, when it has swept away before its devastating agency, reason, and courage, and fortitude, and perseverance, and hope, and confidence.

The influence of this principle as arising from ignorance, and as connected with the imagination, is early seen in children; as, for instance, in their instinctive apprehension from darkness, or from any other cause to which they do not affix certain and defined, and comprehensive ideas. Take, for example, a piece of paper, and present it to a child; it will play with it; amuse itself with it; fold it into fifty forms, and derive pleasure from it: but invest it with some imaginary character—call it a robber, a lion, a wolf, or any thing else which conveys the impression of an unknown and undefined form of mischief, and fear is immediately produced; a fear, which by a prolonged operation upon the system, may be readily converted into terror. The rolling of a carriage, when

heard from a distance, and indistinctly, if it be taken for what it really is, produces no particular emotion; but if it be mistaken for distant thunder, it occasions a sensation of fear: and during that sublime display of nature's power, a thunder-storm, a great degree of anxiety and even terror is developed in some individuals; and very few are entirely exempt from that *awe*, which is in fact *fear*, subdued by reason, and governed by religion. In this case the passion is produced probably by three causes; first, from the immediate influence upon the nervous system, of the peculiar atmospherical state; in some instances, from ignorance of the rationale of the natural phenomena which we witness; and in others, from the amazing power with which we see nature clothed, the magnificent display of her resources, and the consciousness that there is a *probability* of danger to some objects or persons, and the *possibility* that we may form one of those objects; in all these states, ignorance forms the principal source of their widely extended agency.

Again, this principle is shewn by the influence of ghost-stories upon the mind, of fairy tales, and of such like unreal creations of a perverted fancy: we may all recollect the intense interest with which we have listened to these puling follies, until we have longed, yet dreaded to become acquainted with the result, and until we have trembled to be alone, and have fancied that every spot was inhabited by some genius of evil. Ignorance of the perfect falsehood of all these rela-

tions, and a want of acquaintance with their real nature, are the great sources of this terror. And the misfortune is, that when once developed, the passion of fear is most quickly re-excited, and obtains such a hold upon the person, that it is not easily removed, but often clings to the individual for a great portion of his life. It is then of the first importance to banish and prohibit these tales from the nursery, which can have no beneficial influence upon the young mind, and which only serve to fill it with images of terror. Fear is often produced by the sound of cannon, or the display of many physical experiments; aye, even by the simple wonders of the microscope, because we are really unacquainted with the nature of these things, and with the extent of their power to harm us.

The passion of fear is a portion of the conservative principle, and it has been given us as a means of avoiding danger: its immediate object is *flight;* but like every other boon, it has been abused and misplaced: it exists often where there is no danger; and is frequently converted into that degree of terror, which renders flight impossible, rivets the individual to the spot, and paralyses all kind of exertion. Hence it requires precaution to obviate its development, wisdom to direct its influence, and care to prevent its morbid agency.

The operation of this passion is most extensive, both on the corporeal and intellectual system. In the slighter forms of fear, we are agitated by

doubt and suspense; an uneasy sensation is produced about the heart, and a fulness of the throat, and this may very quickly subside upon the removal of the disturbing cause. But should that be continued, and should there be an undefined amount of danger, with an ignorance of its nature and extent, this morbid action is prolonged and augmented: we listen with intense anxiety to the sighing of the wind, as it murmurs through the trees, and agitates their foliage; we know not but that it may be accompanied by some situation of danger; we hesitate to proceed; we endeavour to collect fresh notices of the noise which has alarmed us; we direct the attention in breathless solicitude to the spot whence has proceeded the sound in question; the blood recoils to its citadel the heart, and refuses to seek the extremities of its circulation; it is accumulated in the interior; a creeping chilliness shudders over the whole surface of the body; the legs tremble, and the muscles are feeble; the skin becomes pale from the retreat of the blood, or of a murky red, from its sluggish and impeded circulation; the features of the countenance are fixed with intense astonishment, the eyes are prominent, the ears erect, the hair bristled; the function of respiration is oppressed; the action of the heart is arrested, or rendered irregular; the tongue refuses to give utterance to articulate sounds, or only stammers out incoherent expressions; the brain suffers from congestion, and the stomach, from sympathy with it, experiences nausea and vomiting; a large

and sudden secretion of bile is a frequent consequence; and in subjects so predisposed, apoplexy is not an uncommon result. Fear, too, has a great influence upon the manifestations of mind: by its agency it paralyses perception, annihilates memory, cuts off the supply of exterior notices from the senses; its subjects look without seeing, and hear without comprehending; the principle of fear has entirely lost its original character; its effect is no longer conservative, but rather leads to danger than seeks to avoid it, and at all events isolates its subjects without allowing the power of making any effort to escape.

Fear pursues us even in sleep: and the terrific visions of uneasy slumber, the almost countless forms of nightmare, are some of the most troublesome companions of valetudinarian existence, and haunt the pillow with such images of terror, as to inspire the returning hour of retirement with a positive dread, rather than invest it with that delightful calm, with which "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," is generally attended, when successfully wooed.

When existing in a moderate degree, fear may become a source of pleasure, provided it can be entertained independently of the idea, that our own personal safety is immediately implicated in the cause which produces it. It is certainly an ingredient in the full production of the sublime; and the most magnificent display of nature's power and wonders,—the cataracts of the Nile, a midnignt eruption of Vesuvius, the perpetual

snows of Mont Blanc, the geysers of Iceland, the avalanche of the Alps, a burning forest, the sight of a distant conflagration, a sudden flash of lightning, and the sullen majesty of the succeeding, though distant thunder, *all* inspire us with awe, the result of the sublime, with which some portion of fear is certainly intermingled, yet not in so great a degree, but that the general impression upon the mind is pleasing. Pleasure is also to be derived from the fearful interest we take in the dangers, or supposed dangers of others, as in dramatic exhibitions, the details of tragedy, the creations of the pen of a Radcliffe, or the pencil of a Fuseli, or in the intense solicitude which has heretofore attended the combats of gladiators, and which even now attaches itself to the arena of the bull-fight.

Some individuals are much more fearful than others; and this characteristic timidity is partly original and constitutional; but it is also partly acquired. In the one case it is natural: in the other, it is produced by neglected or mistaken education: *in all*, it is involuntary, and therefore not *criminal*, although when unduly excited, it sometimes leads to a pusillanimity, which perhaps does not deserve a much milder term. Occasionally, a great degree of fearlessness is to be found in children, so that they are not sufficiently careful of themselves; this is however an evil, which generally cures itself, and the result of experience of the ills attendant upon heedlessness of danger,

affords a sufficient lesson to the young, to develop the passion of fear, so far as it may be considered a conservative principle, and induce caution. But by far the more common cast of character is that of timidity. And since its influence on education is not beneficial, it is not to be encouraged: uncontrouled fear may operate a slave, but will not form the man of worth and principle. In general, fear should be avoided as a stimulus to activity: we have seen that its agency upon the brain is to impair and to pervert the intellectual manifestations, and to enfeeble the power of their organ; while its moral influence is not less baneful. However necessary therefore may be punishment and privation, as a counter-agent to delinquency, it should not be held out as a motive to exertion: and those parents must be more than infatuated who will avail themselves of a dark room as a mode of punishment for their children, inspiring them at once with a terror of darkness, which perhaps will never be superseded; and constituting fear a motive to good conduct, which it *ought not to be;* since it is not a principle upon which we are *to act:* its operation should be only conservative, and therefore the simple way in which it can be useful in education, is by inspiring a *fear of doing wrong, for its own sake,* and not *on account of the punishment* which may be annexed to it. *Then* indeed, fear is directed towards its proper object, and may become most useful in securing a flight from evil of every kind;

for it is only by flight that we can be certain of escaping from moral danger: he who parleys with temptation, and loiters on the confines of sin, will generally end by incurring guilt and misery.

Fear is often a source of torment; and man, conscious of his own feebleness, and feeling that his happiness and comfort were materially impaired by the influence of this passion, when dwelling in isolated situations, has constituted it a principle which has led to the formation of society; to the re-union of many in towns and villages; to the institution of the social compact, and of the unwritten laws by which it is held together; as well as to the frame of civil government, and to that code of written law, which is for the punishment of evil doers. But the bosom of man is agitated by an undefined apprehension of future evil; he anticipates with dread he knows not what, and invests futurity with a gloom, which deprives the present even of its cheerfulness, and occasions life to be passed, between the fitful gleam of hope, and the prolonged obscurity of doubt and uncertainty. It is an extension of this principle, which constitutes the fear of death; which consists perhaps in some degree of uncertainty as to the nature of that change, which leads to a disruption of the connexion between the soul and the body; but which relates more particularly to the state of that never-dying principle beyond the grave: and it is only the light of Christianity which can dissipate this ap-

prehensive gloom. *Its* beams will penetrate the grave, and shed the ray of immortality over the extinction of animal life. It will be presently seen, how fear itself may be employed for the removal of this undefined terror of the future *unknown;* for after all, it is ignorance which invests hereafter with its power of exciting dread or alarm.

So also in the production and augmentation of malady, fear operates banefully: it is a depressing passion, and places the constitution in that state of preparation for disease, that it becomes the soil, in which the seeds of morbid action rapidly germinate: and when once produced, its influence on the termination of sickness is decidedly unfavourable: many a patient has been destroyed by fear, who would have floated through a severe struggle by the assistance of hope. Under some circumstances, it is much more easily developed than in others, as in the hypochondriacal, whose fears assume every fantastic and unreal shape, but are just as tormenting to their victims, as if most true. And again, fear is often contagious, and is easily propagated, merely by the influence of the countenance, by that physiognomy, which is the faithful revealer of the thoughts of the heart, and the best interpreter of its desires; and is thus communicated from person to person, and forms that panic which has been so frequently productive of besotted conduct, and of painful consequences. In all these cases, knowledge and principle, especially religious principle, form

the best antidote to the influence of terror. Instruct then the young into the nature of fearful objects, and fix the principle on real and proper subjects as vice and immorality.

Since the grand sources of fear are a consciousness of feebleness; the want of power to resist the operation of injurious causes; and ignorance of the nature of those causes, an acquaintance with which would either dissipate apprehension, or furnish us with the means of obviating their influence; the principal management of this depressing passion, must consist in removing or opposing the agency of all these causes. The former, or a sense of our own feebleness, is to be supplanted by confidence in the providential care of the Most High; by humble trust in the protection of Him, whose tender mercies are over all his works, who superintends all the operations of his hands, governs and directs every event; without whose permission, not even a sparrow falls to the ground; whose eye is ever upon the good, and whose faithfulness is pledged for their preservation. Distrust in the ever watchful care and goodness of Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being, will necessarily occasion fear of those natural ills to which we are every day exposed, and from which alone we are protected by the beneficent laws of that kind Providence, which rides on the whirlwind, and manages the storm; while a principle of hope in God, of affiance in Christ, of faith in his promises, of sure trust and confidence, in that wisdom, and

goodness, and mercy, and love, which operate securely, though unseen, and by means with which we are unacquainted, will obviate apprehension, and enable us to wait patiently for deliverance, until the appointed time is come. *Our* feebleness is supplanted by the power of Omnipotence; *our* worthlessness and inability, by the fulness of his goodness and love; *our* fears, by the promise of his support; *our* doubts, by his faithfulness; *our* insufficiency, by his righteousness and strength; *our* difficulties, by a sincere desire to love and serve *him; our* distrust in ourselves, by *hope* in him, by the expectation of present aid, but far more by the confidence of futurity. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? *hope* thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." Psalm xlii. 11. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psalm xxiii. 4.

A second important method of obviating fear consists in the inculcation of knowledge; in an acquaintance with the nature and properties of its objects; this is too often forgotten: and we conduct ourselves more rationally in the education of our *animals*, than we do in that of our *children*. With the *former*, fear is attempted to be superseded by encouragement, and by repeated acquaintance with its exciting cause; but with the *latter*, this passion is suffered to be dismissed as

it may—perhaps treated as a subject of scorn or ridicule; or constituted in itself a source of punishment: or the child is punished for its exhibition; all which may form a careless, a retired, a feeble, a hypocritical, or a reckless character, but will never produce courage or confidence, or constancy and tenacity of purpose. These are to be obtained only by an acquaintance with the nature and extent of causes, which produce fearfulness, terror, and dismay. Thus, for instance, the apprehension which results from darkness, or from the sublime spectacle of a thunder-storm, or other natural phenomenon, is to be obviated by instruction into the nature of causes which produce it, and thus is it deprived of at least one-half of its terrific influence. And if we cannot explain all the circumstances, we can at least refer to those which are known, and reason from analogy, to those which are unknown; that there are also definite laws governing their agency, and that these result from a combination of natural causes, all of which are under the superintendance of the Creator and Governor of the Universe, and receive their constitution and their power from his wisdom and omnipotence. Thus, the mind may be led to rest upon the simplicity and beauty, the grandeur and utility of events, which heretofore have excited an indescribable apprehension; and it will become difficult *to fear any thing* to which we can ascribe these attributes.

But a third and still more important means of obviating the influence of this passion, is by

developing *itself* as a *moral principle*, directing it to its proper objects, and constituting it a motive to action. This will appear from the consideration, that as excessive fear produces terror, and annihilates the animal and intellectual powers of reaction; so also in morals, does it banish hope, and leave the soul to the misery of despair; a state from which it has no longer the power to escape, or the will to fly; in which it casts away the anchor of peace, and is lost on the billows of futurity, since its joys and its hopes have expired with today. This too, is a principle which largely constitutes the misery of another world: viz. the absence of all hope—the anguish of despair; and if so, surely it is important to restore fear to its intended purpose as a principle of conservation, to save from destruction, and to conduct in the narrow path of life.

A similar conclusion will be drawn from the origin of superstition and idolatry. Man has feared the grand display of nature's power, because he has been ignorant of her processes; natural religion has taught him the existence of a Supreme Being, of superior power and understanding to himself; he has obviously referred all that he did not know, to the intervention of this unseen and mysterious agent; and when he has *witnessed* the devastating effect of storms, and has remained unconscious of their more extensive benefits, he has easily referred them to the anger of the Deity, and has imagined rites in order to appease that anger, and propitiate *his* favour. Hence the origin

of superstitious fear, and idolatrous worship; for man in his ignorance, has soon imagined a bodily form for that power, whose immensity he has observed, and which he now constitutes an object of worship, and "prayeth unto it, and saith deliver me, for thou art my God. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say I have burnt part of it in the fire; yea also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh and eaten it, and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth of ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand." Isaiah xliv. 19, 20. But if such be the consequences of untaught, uncontrouled, misdirected, unsubdued fear, how necessary is it that the principle be educated aright, and that man be saved from all these evils!

The proper object of fear is God, and this fear will be a preservative principle in the midst of temptation; since it will produce a steady and determined flight from evil, hatred to sin, anxiety to avoid the paths which lead towards it, and an earnest desire to obey the commands of Heaven without exception, however difficult, however repugnant to the natural disposition. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." Proverbs viii. 13. "Also I said, it is not good that ye do, ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our ene-

mies. But so did not I, because of the fear of God." Jeremiah v. 9, 15. This fear is represented as the highest reach of the Christian character; "for I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from *all* filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*" 2 Corinthians vi. 18, and vii. 1. The fear of God must be carefully distinguished from that "fear of man which bringeth a snare; for whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." Proverbs xxix. 25. The fear of man will often lead us to palliate error, and to tolerate vice, and to lend our countenance to that which God abhors; and it is placed in direct opposition to that *trust in God,* which forms an essential ingredient in his fear.

This principle is also opposed to that apprehension which is the consequence of guilt, and which constitutes indeed a part of its annexed punishment. It is an impression of the offended Majesty of heaven, an alarm within, which often disturbs the rest of the sinner, a monition of natural conscience, an involuntary testimony to the equity of the laws of the righteous Governor; an acknowledgment of his justice, of his right to demand obedience, and of our liability to punishment, when we refuse to hear his voice, and listen to his commands. Even this fear is however *sometimes,* and perhaps *often times* "the beginning of wisdom;" how much better then is it,

" if iniquity be in thine hand, to put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles; for thou shalt then lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear." Job xi. 14, 15.

But again, that fear of God, which consists in a dread of offending him, and in the desire of obeying his commands is the very basis of the Christian character. " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Proverbs i. 7. " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." Ibid ix. 10. " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." Psalm cxi. 10. The want of faith, to realize the presence of God, in every situation of life; the prosperity of those who fear not God; the calamities of the righteous, the impunity of the wicked; of those who have no bands in their death; and the absence of apparent and immediate reward to those who love and serve *him;* are so many causes operating against the growth and influence of this fear of the Most High; and it is therefore necessary to shew, that " because sentence against an evil work is not executed *speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him; but it shall not

be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow, because he feareth not before God." Ecclesiastes viii. 11—13. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." Matthew x. 28. Well, indeed, may the Christian who has made the Lord his trust, exclaim, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm xxvii. 1. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Isaiah xli. 10—14. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and when through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Ibid. xliii. 1—3. "Fear not, O Jacob my servant, for I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon thy head, and my blessing upon thine offspring (Ibid. xliv. 2.) so effectually

is the Christian protected from the necessity for fearfulness.

On the contrary, great advantages result from the humble, simple, unaffected fear of the Lord; as for instance, "the fear of the Lord prolongeth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened." Proverbs x. 27. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge." Ibid. xiv. 26. "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Ibid. xiv. 27. "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life; and he that hath it shall abide satisfied: he shall not be visited with evil." Ibid. xix. 23. "By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life." Ibid. xxii. 4. But a very great variety of blessings are promised to those who fear God; as, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Psalm xxv. 14. "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." Ibid. xxxiii. 18. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Ibid. xxxiv. 7. O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him." Ibid. xxxiv. 9. "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him." Ibid. lxxxv. 9. "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him." Ibid. ciii. 11. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Ibid. ciii. 13. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also

will hear their cry, and will save them." Ibid. cxlv. 19. "And the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him." Ibid. cxlvii. 11.

And since such are the evils resulting from the principle of fear unduly excited, such its advantages when fixed on its proper object, and such the blessings promised to its exercise, let it be the design of education to develop, to controul, and to direct this passion: and to conclude the whole, "Ye that fear the Lord praise him;" and "ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield." Psalm cxv. 11.

Section IX. *Of Courage.*

The basis of courage rests on the desire after superiority to others, and of *evincing* that superiority by a higher reach of noble daring, or by a firmer and more unbending fortitude; in fact, in a greater capacity for doing and suffering under the difficulties and trials of life. It consists in encountering danger from which fear would induce us to shrink; in employing the means of resistance or escape with promptitude and effect; and in maintaining our ground with unyielding patience, where we cannot make a successful advance, and under difficulties which we cannot hope to overcome, as well as in dangers from which we cannot fly; and all this without a loss of that self-possession which is usually termed

presence of mind. Courage is then the power of conquering *fear*, and arises from confidence in our own prowess and constancy. Where however it is the mere result of *passion*, it is not always to be relied upon; for it will suddenly fail in the hour of greatest danger, and its influence will be superseded by unforeseen terror; the brave man shall become a coward, and shall act so as he would blush to acknowledge to any but himself. *They* do not always possess the greatest share of courage, who make the most obtrusive display of its exercise; and that will be often found to be deficient in *sustained* exertion, which was the most dazzling, and brilliant, and shewy at the first appearance of difficulty. As a mere passion, it is liable to the excitement of animal feeling; but very quickly subsides again, as soon as that feeling which gave it birth may have evaporated: it is also readily superseded by a revulsion of sensibility of an opposite character, or by the occasion of any new and unexpected situation for which the mind was not prepared. Before, therefore, it can be rendered available, as a moral principle, it must be educated as such; and while it retains all the fervour of passion, and the intensity of desire, it must be invested with all the firmness of decision; and all the constancy of unquestioned motive, sustained by that powerful will, which is the result of deliberate judgment and conviction; and it must be supported by all the arguments of reason, and assisted by the dic-

tates of conscience, and governed by the laws of religion.

There is a great difference as to the degree of courage evinced by different individuals: one child shall be fearless of danger, another shall tremble at his own shadow; yet it can by no means be predicated from this circumstance which will form the most courageous character; for place, in after life, the former in a situation where he will need the energetic support, and the prolonged aid of moral motive, and the latter under circumstances of danger, in which he will have had an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with the nature of that danger, and of thus obviating the ignorance which has made him a coward from his own shadow; and it will be found, that the passion of the man will yield to the principle of the intellectual being, and *à fortiori*, to the fortitude of the Christian.

Courage is to be carefully distinguished from a certain degree of fearlessness, which may be found in combination with it, but which is oftener met with as the result of peculiar physical temperament. It consists not in an unconsciousness, or disregard of danger, or in a disbelief of its existence, or in the absence of *fear*, but in overcoming its agency, in forming an exact estimate of danger, and in selecting and employing the means of obviating its influence.

Although we have stated that fearlessness is in a great measure depending upon peculiar animal

temperament, yet neither this nor courage are to be found in any proportion corresponding to the amount of *physical* power: witness the unbroken constancy, the undaunted perseverance, the heroic devotion of the female, contrasted with the wavering honour, the changeful principle, the selfish poltroonery of the mere man of muscle and nerve, and bone and fibre. Strength of body may indeed add to the self-confidence which is necessary for the exercise of courage; but firmness of mind will live through difficulties under which the former sinks, and will conduct to efforts which would have been thought almost incredible. A great mind united to a feeble body, will do more, and sustain more, than gigantic animal power with more puny mental manifestations; exactly in proportion as principle is of more value than passion, moral virtue than feeling, habit than occasion, and above all the steady hope of religion than the support of inferior motive.

Solitude is the sphere for the truest exercise of courage: it is when the individual stands alone, that he is called upon for the highest efforts of this principle; for the idea of being sustained by numbers, gives energy to fortitude, while it diminishes the impression of danger, and therefore the most difficult situation for its display is, where there is no exterior support, and where those around us are seeking to weaken our strength; and the effort of bravery consists in steadily opposing their sinister influence. The operation of numbers upon this passion is particularly visible

in the instance of *military valour*, a species of courage which is often mistaken for the latter more universal principle and passion, and placed as its substitute; a mistake of the very first importance in education. The exposure of the person, amidst all the pomp and circumstance of war, surrounded by thousands of thoughtless companions, and urged on by a boundless fatalism, may perfectly consist without courage as a principle; and there are probably very few who have not experienced the difference between the calm preceding an action, and the hurry and confusion of the succeeding battle. It is well known, too, how much more military valour is dependent upon physical circumstances, and especially early animal habits, than it is upon the exertion of courage as a moral and intellectual principle. Many a soldier who has played the hero in the field, who has marched up to the guns of his enemy, who has scaled the ramparts, ascended the breach, or mounted a forlorn hope, has exhibited the pusillanimity of a little child upon the dressing of a wound, and a degree of irritability of which the very feeblest would be ashamed. That *may be valour*, but it is not courage, which requires the stimulus of present occasion for its development, and which is irrespective of futurity for its support. True courage can alone be sustained in danger and difficulty, by the prospect of that recompense of reward which awaits those who fight the good fight of faith. Valour may prompt to a *carelessness* of life, but courage alone can produce its

sustained devotion to a good cause. Valour may produce deeds of *heroic achievement*, when aided by the love of glory, to which the world may award its meed of applause; but that man is the most courageous who dares to resist evil, who is not valorous enough to commit sin: "how shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

The principle by which courage appears to be sustained from the presence of others, may be employed advantageously in moral education, by constantly keeping in view that the eye of Omniscience is upon the path of his creatures; that every act, and thought, and feeling is framed in the presence of *Him* whose power far exceeds the accumulated strength of all mankind; whose knowledge extends to the inmost recesses of the heart; in whose favour is life, and whose judgment of our actions will abide long after the feeble remains of mortality of our fellow-men shall have mouldered into dust, and buried in forgetfulness, their opinion of our conduct; and above all, that it will be found as a lasting memorial at that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and when the books shall be opened, and irreversible judgment shall be passed according to the deeds done in the body, and endless joy or sorrow shall be the result.

Courage is sustained by hope, exactly in proportion as it is paralysed by fear; and the influence of hope is peculiarly operative when it is placed upon those unseen, and eternal joys which

await the Christian conqueror; who is victorious through the blood of the Saviour, and the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." Proverbs xviii. 12. Courage therefore may be animated by the expectation of present success, of immediate good to ourselves, of lasting benefit to others; but above all, of doing the will of God, of being accepted of him through the sacrifice of Christ, and of one day entering into that joy of his Lord, which is reserved for the good and faithful servant, who "has been faithful over a few things."

However modified by circumstances, courage still forms a principle of conservation, by whose influence the body is preserved in danger, from the intrepidity with which it is encountered, and in difficulty by the fortitude with which it is sustained. By its agency, the operation of fear is limited, and even banished from the mind, while hope is animated by the most cheering prospects of safety and enjoyment. However the operation of this passion may be primitively *personal*, it does not centre in self, but extends its views to others. This is particularly remarkable in the influence of compassion, and in the promptings of its self-devotion to rescue others from imminent danger; incurring the hazard of self-destruction, in the hope of saving some fellow-creature from death; whose only claim upon our notice is, that he is unfortunate, that he is made of the same materials with ourselves, and that he has *a soul to be*

saved; a circumstance, which will give point and efficiency, and a noble object to the *truest courage*, which in addition to the present risk of animal life, will go further, will contemplate the danger of the immortal principle, enslaved by sin, and drowning in iniquity; will fearlessly bear its testimony against every appearance of evil; will submit to the obloquy of the world for this purpose, and will steadily and uniformly strive, especially by example, to inculcate the courage of perpetual hostility to vice, and the preference of obedience to the will of God over the approbation of our erring fellow-creatures.

It is then, as a moral principle, that the influence of courage is to be developed by education. And first, it is to be exercised in resisting vice, and in avoiding its hidden snares: its existence is not to be tolerated in our presence; its allurements must be withstood, and its crooked policy steadily opposed; we dare not parley with its blandishments, or enter into any compromise of principle for the sake of not openly protesting against its tyranny and its pleasures. But in so doing we incur the hatred of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. It is not for us to judge them; but it is our duty to set our face as a rock against sin, and iniquity, and every kind of evil; and this is not a duty which may be lost in generalities, or which may be left to those whose peculiar office it is to teach man the wisdom that is from above; but it is the privilege of every individual. "Arise, for this matter

belongeth *unto thee;* we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it."

A second mode of exhibiting courage, is in so far daring to be singular, as to avow a dissent from the maxims of the world, to deviate from its customs, to avoid its habits, to separate from its amusements, to escape from its follies, not to be enamoured of its vanities and good things; to be disentangled from the flattery of its smile, and to rise superior to its frown. This is often a difficult pursuit: steadily to acknowledge none other guide than the pure and holy law of God; to turn neither to the right hand, nor to the left, but to pursue an undeviating course of rectitude—a rectitude which reaches to the thoughts, and feelings, and emotions of the heart; which acknowledges no basis for action, but the revealed will of God, and no influence of custom, except such as is conformable to the character of Christ; which allows no power of habit, but that which results from the reiterated practice of the precepts of the gospel; and which seeks not to imitate a feeling, or emulate an emotion, which is not in union with the strict and holy law of God. "Take courage, and do; and the Lord shall be with the good." 2 Chronicles xix. 11. "Be strong, and of good courage: and the Lord, he it is, that doth go before thee; he will be with thee; he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed." Deuteronomy xxxi. 7, 8. "Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest learn to do, according to all the

law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Joshua i. 7. "Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments, which the Lord charged Moses with, concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed." 1 Chronicles xxii. 13.

But there is yet a higher reach of courage, which consists in suffering misfortune, in bearing pain, in forgiving injuries, and in rising above the ruins of time. It is far easier to do, than to suffer: the bustling activity of the former, the energetic pursuit, the employment of diversified means, the calling up all the powers of the mind to resist evil, the ever changing objects of desire, are so many points on which the energies of the immaterial principle may rest, and whence it may produce an extensive influence upon the conduct. But for the broken-hearted to sit down quietly under suffering and privation; to submit to the pain of disease, and the languor of convalescence without a murmur; to acquiesce in the appointment of Providence; to preserve equanimity, and to praise God for the removal of his blessings; to be subjected to the scorn, and derision, and haughty contempt of our more prosperous fellow-creatures, and only to imitate Christ, who wept over, and prayed for his persecutors; and finally, to watch the crumbling down of the tower of our

prosperity; to see part after part falling into ruins; to observe the shaft of our anticipations broken from its pedestal; to linger over the gradual decay, and slow extinction of our hopes,—is an effort of moral courage, which we can only hope to attain, by the aid of the Spirit of grace. Not the wisdom of Socrates, nor the highest efforts of that philosophy, which would teach us, that there is no *real evil* in the world; or which makes all its good things to consist in the gratification of the senses; no consideration of the beauty of moral virtue; not even the radiance which surrounds the path of the good man; not the love of praise, or the desire of being highly esteemed by our fellow-creatures, will enable us to bear the rude blast of adversity in retirement, when no eye is upon us, with unruffled serenity, and to bless the hand which smites our dearest comforts, and to feel our hearts more closely united to that Saviour, which would purify us in the furnace of affliction, and invigorate every christian virtue, by that discipline which will detect the spurious feeling, and from which the genuine principle, will come out, not only uninjured, but improved. It is then the courage of the Christian, sustained by present aid, by the aid of Him, whose "form is like the Son of God," and under whose protection, "the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them;" (Daniel iii. 27;) and

supported by future hopes, by a hope full of immortality, which will alone sustain us, in our conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil, and will enable us to triumph over the last enemy; and which has supported the christian martyr at the stake, and has enabled him by his principles to rise superior to bodily pain.

It must be recollected here, that all men are not martyrs, though all must die; they who died as witnesses of the truth of Christ's religion, were no doubt supported in an extraordinary manner, by the comforting and strengthening aid of the Holy Spirit; they died as witnesses to the efficacy of their principles, and it was necessary that these should enable them to triumph over the malice of their enemies; and that they should form a part of that "cloud of witnesses," which should induce us "to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews xii. 1, 2. It is to be recollected also, that *they* died for the most part with the full tide of their energies about them, with unbroken health of body, and under the influence of that intellectual, and mental or spiritual vigour, which is its consequence, and which enabled them, under the excitation of being found faithful unto death, and of inheriting the crown, as well as the pang of martyrdom, to

praise him from whom all blessings flow, and with their last breath of agony, to pray for their persecutors.

But the fires of persecution have been extinguished, and Christians are not now called upon to such trials of their faith and patience; and when they meet the last enemy, it is commonly under circumstances very different; when the body has been worn down by disease, and is crumbling into dissolution; when one after another of the energies of life have been daily loosened; when the attention has been distracted by pain; when perception has been rendered obtuse by the gradual failure of the integrity of the brain; when the power of memory, reason, and intelligence are enfeebled; when reflection is almost impossible, and the agency of the will over the thoughts is suspended; when in fact, this feeble tabernacle, which with all its beauty and utility, has served but as a material prison for the immaterial and immortal principle, is fast giving way, and sinking under the influence of disease; and refusing much longer to remain the servant of that spiritual essence; it is not then that the language of triumph is to be expected; expiring nature refuses to give utterance to such intellectual manifestations; and the peace of hope, the quiet and serene confidence of faith, are more consonant with its state than the song of exultation and of joy. And even *these*, faith and hope, may be obscured by disease, and enfeebled by decay; and however gratifying it may be to surrounding

friends, to witness a triumphant death-bed; still it must be recollected that the little incidents of the last hour so greedily treasured up by memory, are more frequently the evidence of an exhausted, or excited, or irritated brain, than proofs of the actual feelings of the immaterial principle, when contemplating its separation from the body; and that the song of victory is more appropriate to the disembodied spirit, than when undergoing that pang of dissolution which is to it, the last consequence of sin. Besides they who have witnessed the fast closing hours of *numbers*, will have perceived that there is no relation between them, and the years of conduct which have preceded and which have formed the character. These have been the days of struggle, the appropriate field for the display of Christian heroism; for combating with sin, subjugating passion, weeding out every idol from the heart, and fighting the good fight of faith; these are the bright spots, on which memory should delight to dwell, on the days of those who like Asa, "took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and renewed the altar of the Lord; whose heart was perfect all his days, although the high places were not taken away out of Israel." 2 Chronicles, xv. 8, 17.

Courage is to be distinguished from *fanaticism;* the one appeals to *principle* as its basis, the other rests on *feeling;* the object of the one is the extension of obedience to the will of Heaven, that of

the other proselytism; the means by which these objects are to be accomplished are respectively *persecution,* and the exhibition of a holy and consistent life. The fanatic may be stimulated to deeds of intrepidity from which the humble and diffident Christian shrinks; the fanatic rests more on the tone of his organization, the Christian on the rectitude of his principles; the one acts from the fervour of emotion, the other from the consistency of duty; the one is stimulated by the prospect of some fancied joy, the other by the desire of obedience to the will, and imitation of the character of Christ. Fanaticism will not be very scrupulous about the means of accomplishing its purpose; the only weapon of Christianity is the example of the incarnate Saviour, in his life, and ministry, and sufferings. The Christian's courage is an abiding principle, while that of fanaticism is evanescent, and will wear itself out if not contradicted and opposed. Fanaticism earnestly contends for, and holds most dear, some points which are contrary to reason, while the Christian's courage is exerted only in the defence of that which is rational. The course of the fanatic may be marked by a more brilliant glare, but it will be a lurid and deceitful light, and will diffuse less warmth than the clear and steady shining of the Christian, uniformly pursuing his unwearied track, and by its genial warmth calling into life many excellent virtues.

Finally, the courage of the Christian is evinced

by *patience* under the many difficulties and vexations of life, those minor ills, which scarcely call for exertion to fight against, and which, from their very minuteness and diminutive power, are too often overlooked, as not requiring the exercise of Christian principle; and thus frequently prove a snare, from the want of watchfulness. There are many occasions of life too trifling to demand a serious struggle, in which the mind is disturbed and rendered uneasy and irritable, and on which courage, if duly exercised, would produce that intrepid resignation, that imperturbable calm, that victory over passion, that effort of self-denial, that abandonment of our own will, that ready sacrifice of earthly good, and present opinion, and wounded pride, and disappointed hope, which would preserve the mind quietly resting on that sure and steady centre of peace, and patience, and confidence, which will save it from becoming the sport of every wave of passion, or feeling, or prejudice; and will lead it to wait until the providence of God shall see fit to deliver it from these circumstances of trial: "wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Psalm xxvii. 14. "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom: a man's enemies are the men of his own house, therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." Micah vii. 5, 6, 7. Such then are the principles upon which Christian

courage is to be educated, and led forward from *victory to victory*, unto the measure of the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Section X. *Of Ennui.*

Ennui is the sad prerogative of civilized life, and of that absence from energetic pursuit, which is so essential to the happiness of man. It will generally be found in inverse proportion to the manifestation of intellectual and bodily vigour; and it haunts particularly the footsteps of the rich and the luxurious, whose *situation would be improved*, could they exchange the gloomy shadows with which it surrounds the evening of life, for the real sorrows, the toil and care of those who are struggling with adversity, and who have no hope of obtaining the bread of their daily meal, but by daily exertion. Ennui too commonly fastens upon the retirement of him who has laboured for years to obtain freedom from business; whose mind has been harassed by incessant application, and who has sighed from day to day after the leisure of the country. But now, having realized the object of his desires, and having obtained for himself all that will be necessary to exhaust his wishes, he sits down in his rural villa, and finds too late, that enjoyment has fled with the recurrence of daily pursuit. He is amused, indeed, while the charm and freshness of novelty

last, with the decoration of his grounds; but in proportion as he is intimately acquainted with every tree, and every scite, and every prospect, these all become insipid; he loses his relish for simple pleasures; from his habits of business he has probably few intellectual resources; dissatisfaction broods upon his forehead, disturbs his slumbers with images of happiness which are lost to him for ever; he wakens with a sigh; the very play of his life is an oppression; without a single cause for uneasiness, trouble gnaws his bosom; every object is viewed through a distorted medium; nothing gives him pleasure; even the beauty and activity of spring fall as a blast upon his prospects, for he compares its jocund hours with the misery within; from every circumstance around him he extracts bitterness; his health fails; his nerves are rendered irritable; his temper, soured by disappointment, becomes gloomy and morose; and he lives a monument of the feebleness and impotence of man, and of the impossibility of finding happiness in this world's goods; or he dies unregretted, with the cloud of uncertainty upon his future prospects. *Then* it is generally that he would give wealth to prolong that life which has been so burdensome, and which the wearisomeness of continuance has probably hastened to a close.

But ennui is not confined to the retirement of the merchant; it will be seen in close attendance upon the man of letters—upon him who has spent the best years of his life in colleges, or in solitude,

that he might secure competence and comforts to his old age; but who, having obtained the object of his hopes and his privations, finds that he has lost the relish for their enjoyment; even his books fail to afford their accustomed resource; the little vexations which surround him become intolerable burdens: in the midst of affluence he anticipates want, and feels all the misery of indigence, without any of its alleviations; he would give much to be re-instated in his former situation, and the consciousness of having thrown away his real enjoyments, and the shame of possessing a wish for the possibility of their return, and the tastelessness of unbroken pleasure, the insipidity of his occupations, the absence of positive care, all aggravate his regret, and convert him into the peevish, irritable, fretful, melancholic child of uncontrouled sensibility; he feels at every point when he ought not to feel, while he is deaf and blind to the proper objects of pleasure; his senses are perverted; his intellectual faculties jaded by perpetual irritation without an object; his imagination tortured by images of horror; and his will so completely deprived of its stability, that the waywardness of infancy, and the imbecility of extreme old age, alike combine to render him a source of misery to himself, and a burden to others.

In these several states, it is clear that there is a forgetfulness of the Providence of God, as well as of the gratitude due to the author of our blessings; and of the duties with which these should

stand inseparably connected. The truly good man can never feel ennui, except as the consequence *of disease;* for he cannot constantly and habitually be discontented with that very life, which he is taught and commanded to cherish as a boon, and to employ in the service of the Most High.

The influence of this passion may be traced in childhood; and to its agency is to be ascribed the perpetually recurring question of the ill-educated, "what shall I do?" "how shall I be amused?" the constant desire after new playthings, and the absolute loathing of their sight, when the charm of novelty has passed away; the irritability of indolence; the listlessness and fatigue of a holiday; the fretfulness and ill-temper of the spoiled child. The characteristic features of this passion are the same, however modified by circumstance; there is a family likeness, which forbids the possibility of mistake; and *all* owe their origin to one and the same cause, viz. the desire of changing the present for some other situation, the nature of which is not well understood, and perhaps may not be very material, so it be but change; and in the anxiety of substituting causeless solicitude for some real object of hope or fear; and of discovering some more stirring sensations, which may be placed in the room of the dull monotony of life, and which may be supplanted by emotions which are less feeble, and more stimulating.

What then is the real nature of ennui? It con-

sists in a peculiar condition of the brainular system, occasionally produced by causes operating primarily on the body, disturbing some one or other of its important functions, and thus acting as an irritant to the brain; but more frequently depending upon a state of morbid excitability of that viscus, induced by the agency of causes exerting their influence through the medium of the mind. It is in its phenomena of mental manifestation, most nearly allied, to those produced by paralysis, upon the system of voluntary muscles: there is an interception of their power of action in obedience to volition, a *paralysis of mind*, together with a high degree of involuntary irritability, without object; an enfeebling disquietude, which contributes rather to extend, than to controul the deadening influence of the malady: there is an undefinable languor in the exercise of all the intellectual functions; a torpor of right feeling; a perfect impotence of reflection and action, while grounded upon just principles; a disgust towards all that is good and pleasant in existence; aye, even a difficulty of living, and an impossibility of enjoying the goods of fortune and of Providence. But superadded to all this, is the tormenting consciousness, that the mental powers should be far otherwise employed; that they might have been devoted to higher, nobler, and never failing objects of pursuit; and that this state of dissatisfaction cannot exist without ingratitude to the Almighty Parent of good. This reflection fills

the cup of misery to the brim, and life becomes a real burden.

But the victims of this fearful malady are not beyond the reach of hope; neither is their situation, whatever may have been its origin, otherwise than one demanding our compassion; it is most truly pitiable, and deserves our highest efforts to assuage and to remove. In the attempt to administer relief, it will always be necessary to recollect, that ennui claims a variety of sources; and that the first object should be, to cleanse the fountain from which it springs. This is either bodily, mental, habitual, or circumstantial, in proportion as disturbance of bodily function, or mental solicitude, or erroneous habits, or painful and untoward circumstances, may have served to develop the peculiar irritability, which constitutes its essence. But when once fully formed, whatever may have been its source, its operation is very analogous in all cases, and is rapidly extended, so as to become an almost universal agent. It is a most mistaken notion, that *dissipation* will operate as a curative measure. It often happens, that this form of society is recommended to the unfortunate subject of ennui by the heedless and misjudging, who carry not their views beyond the surface, and who think only of dispelling the dark cloud of melancholy. But it will be unavailing; for if the vapour be for a little while driven away by the agitations of society, it will only be to render the succeeding gloom still darker, while the power of exertion is diminished

by every fresh effort, and the mind is enfeebled, and its irritability is increased, by every renewed attempt to exorcise the phantom, by any unhallowed rites. Society is the food of ennui; and it is not in its crowded haunts of folly, that both bane and antidote meet together. It is indeed true, that a certain degree of *variety* is necessary in order to form exercise for the mind; but this must be moderate, of an unstimulating nature, and judiciously applied; or it will produce excitement without power to sustain the consequent action, and will therefore terminate in deepening shades of this gloomy passion.

It should be recollected, that man is so constituted, as to be pleased by change; that even in his best state, pleasure will become painful by the constancy of its iteration; and that the dulness of monotony is always fatiguing and uncomfortable: but that when the mental system is under the morbid influence of ennui, these peculiarities also assume its unnatural character; and that from the abuse of preceding enjoyment, there is now an absolute incapacity for relishing moderate pleasures, and a very greatly augmented fastidiousness as to their recurrence. Hence the great importance of selecting with delicacy those pursuits which will engage without exciting, and which will form a simple variety in the occupations of the day. This *loss of appetite* for enjoyment, does not arise from *debility*, but from *irritation* of the intellectual organ, and is to be removed by soothing and strengthening, not by

stimulating the brain. And since there exists in some persons a greater degree of predisposition to ennui than in others; and since perhaps this will be found, or at least will be more readily visible in females, and in children, than in males and adults, it will be always right to weigh well the peculiarities of the mental and bodily constitution, and to be guided by them in the employment of remedies.

In the removal of ennui, the great indications are to obviate the immediately exciting cause of the passion, on whatever system it may first have exerted its influence; gradually to raise the tone of the enfeebled mental manifestations, by successive, persevering, but indirect efforts; gently to insinuate a greater power of the will, over some slight and remote actions, and by slow degrees to employ it upon larger, and still larger exertions; to fix the attention upon a change and succession of objects, but never to suffer it to become exhausted by their continuance; to soothe the irritability of the mind, by engaging it upon pursuits, which will employ without fatigue, and interest without excitement; to calm the fears, and restlessness, and disquietude, rather by occupation than by argument, and by gradually winding up the tone of the mental system, to a higher reach of moral action; to extend the influence of returning healthy function, by diversifying the mental manifestations, particularly called into prominence; by gently rousing correct feeling and principle, developing the smile of

benevolence, the tear of sympathy, the compassionate effort; and by recalling the patient to a sense of duty, of gratitude to God, and of a return of love and obedience for his unnumbered, and undeserved blessings.

But it is far better to prevent than it is to cure; and how is the influence of ennui to be guarded against in the education of children? The great secret of prevention consists in the due employment and improvement of time! When this has been diligently accomplished, there will be very little to fear from the agency of this passion, except as arising in a few instances from bodily causes, for *there will be no room for its development.* To the young, there should be no idle time; the day should be employed between a supply of the wants of nature, study, recreation, and exercise; there should be no intervals of cessation from pursuit. It is a most important law, that no time is to be wasted; every minute must be employed; and then children will grow up with that disposition to improve each passing hour, that they will not bear to lose the numerous periods of trifling, which are made up from the want of doing any thing, during the few minutes which elapse, between the cessation of one duty, and the excitement of the attention to the next coming occupation. If we duly estimate the importance of time, the slender portion at best, allotted to man, and the brevity of the longest life when contrasted with eternity; and if we recollect, that during this short period man's eternal destiny is fixed,

and that he will be happy or miserable for ever, according to the use he has made of this talent, surely we cannot want another motive to induce us to "redeem the time, because the days are evil." Ephesians v. 16. Time can only be said to be *properly redeemed*, when we have not a single unemployed interval; and when we carefully embrace and improve all the means placed within our reach for the development of our talents, as also for their improvement; and when we seize every occasion and opportunity presented to us by Providence, in order to consecrate them to the glory of God, and the good of others; not suffering these seasons to be stolen from us by neglect or indifference; or to be lost by cares, and anxieties, and solicitudes about present unimportant scenes; or to be absorbed by any consideration of amusement, or to be suspended by any secondary object: and if we have been in the habit of losing time, and frittering away our days, and degrading our existence, and forgetting the object of our high calling, and resting satisfied in strenuous indolence, or amusement, let the diligence of such be doubled, and may we do the more good in time to come; "for the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians v. 1, 2, 6.

SECTION XI. *Of Admiration. Of Enthusiasm.*

a. Admiration.

ADMIRATION is a certain movement of the soul, produced by the contemplation of some great perfection; particularly the sublime and beautiful in nature, the wonderful and ingenious in art, the strong and capacious in intellect, the just and virtuous in morals, and the pure and holy in religion. It is *just* in proportion to our intimate acquaintance with the object which has produced it: but such is the perversity of human nature, that it is usually most *intense* when it results from considering phenomena which we do not thoroughly understand, or cannot satisfactorily explain. As a *passion*, it consists therefore for the most part in an *unexplained new sensation*, and diminishes in proportion as we become familiar with its impression, and as time and circumstance shall have thrown the light of knowledge over causes and effects which were before concealed, by that veil of undefined form, and uncertain influence, which gave to the one a degree of power, and to the other a measure of grandeur and magnitude, which neither the former nor the latter intrinsically deserved. *So* frequently have we been led to admire from association the remains of departed grandeur, though now fast mouldering into a heap of undistinguished ruin, and intrinsically possessing no

claims to our attention; and *so* have we been often induced to entertain the same sentiment for conduct which has appeared grand and magnificent at a distance, but which upon close inspection we find to be marked with all the littleness of selfish motive; around it twines the picturesque, but useless ivy of display; the storm of envy beats upon its disjointed associations; and the slow, but uniform and constant operation of unsound, anti-social, and irreligious principle is crumbling into ruin, that fabric of moral action which can alone be securely built on love to God, and charity to man.

It will be remarked too, that admiration is more generally excited by circumstances and events, which bear some kind of analogy with our present situation, our wants, and the capacity for their immediate supply. The passion of *fear* is more readily excited by the idea of power and grandeur of which we cannot calculate the extent, or to which we attach the idea of supernatural agency; that of *admiration*, on the contrary, by the exertion of *useful* power and ability of which we do not fear the influence, and feel that we may hope to emulate. Thus the savage, the uncivilized, and the ignorant are *dismayed* by an eclipse of the sun, which they imagine to be portentous of evil; while they admire the display of physical energy, and the capacity for action or suffering: *their great man* is the individual who scalps his enemy; who is successful in the chase; who can endure hunger, and thirst, and privation,

and pain without a murmur; and who can exhibit the greatest amount of courage in encountering the last physical evil, and the ingenious torture which often precedes it, without an expression of suffering. But with the cultivated mind, that which has excited fear in the ignorant, now produces admiration; and the display of physical energy which with them has developed the latter passion, is valued in its place, but *ceases to excite admiration*, which is reserved by preference for the claims of intellect, the perfection of genius, or the refined sensibilities of moral beauty.

This general principle admits of a much more limited application; thus we admire particularly the highest efforts of reason, or application, or virtue, as adapted to any favourite pursuit, or as displayed by our own friends and relatives, or even by those with whom we are only more distantly connected. But the first object proposed for our admiration is the *Great God;* the magnificent, unknown architect of this world, and all its wonders; the Author and Giver of *life*, that unseen principle, which is known to us only by its effects. Our admiration of the Supreme Being is produced not only by the spectacle of the universe, the wonders of his creating hand, the astonishing resources of nature, the minute yet omniscient and ever-watchful cares of his Providence; his moral government; the endless wisdom displayed in the history of his creature man; his holiness as pourtrayed in his hatred of sin; his

justice in punishing it; his mercy and love in finding out a way of redemption from it; his constant compassion in preserving his wandering creatures, calling into life good desires, and giving them strength to be developed in good actions; his fidelity in ensuring their safety through trials and difficulties, and carrying them on to final victory; his perfect equity in apportioning the reward and punishment attached to keeping his laws, or to rebellion against him; and the communications of his grace to those who ask and seek for it, though they have no claim to his favour but the sum of their own sinfulness, their need of a Saviour, and their belief in the efficacy of Christ's atoning sacrifice; these are especially the objects which should engage and fix our admiration here, and which will certainly fill the happy spirit with wonder and amazement, and love, throughout the ages of eternity.

The great design of education, therefore, is to give a proper direction to this passion; and to divert it from splendid, but less worthy objects; so true is it, that *religious principle* is the only safeguard to the young from the numerous errors and temptations with which they are surrounded. It will frequently happen, that the necessity for the exercise of *this principle* will appear in controuling the influence of admiration; for we shall be too frequently disposed to invest great and prosperous wickedness with a halo of success, which claims the homage of this passion, and which blinds us to the real state of its subject,

which has *no peace now*, and whose prospect of futurity resembles that of the man, who in the full possession of life, and health, and blessing, would leap without thought into a sightless, fathomless cavern, from which he has no chance of return, upon the slender, baseless hope that it may lead him to a world of undefined pleasure, and unmingled enjoyment, to which he has precisely no other claim than that of never having sought an acquaintance with it, or prepared himself for it. Such is the state of those who live on in prosperous iniquity, relying upon the mercy of God, without a thought, or a hope of preparation how to meet him, or how to satisfy the demands of his justice.

Thus, the good and the great alone should be permitted to excite our admiration; and the young should be most carefully guarded from fixing it upon the polish of fashion, or upon a fascinating manner, or an insinuating address, or upon any thing short of real and substantial *worth*. It is not the exterior which should claim our attention, but the sterling attributes of character, and those only which we can venture to imitate without doing violence to the convictions of our conscience. With these limitations it becomes a social sentiment, in which we desire that others should participate; not only for their sakes, that the sphere of *their* pleasures may be enlarged, but also for our *own;* and the intensity and imperiousness of the passion may be heightened and enlarged, that our conceptions may be augmented, and our ac-

quaintance with moral and intellectual existence may be extended; and thus, that the desire after good, the appetite for novelty, the love of virtue, the wants of the immortal spirit may be filled and satisfied with truth.

There is only one caution more on this head: admiration may be cultivated *as a passion* too exclusively, and may not be sufficiently guarded by *religious active principle;* and in this case, with individuals of very acute sensibility, it will sometimes be in danger of degenerating into *ecstacy*, a pleasing state of inactive, and ineffective excitation, in which the mind indulges the luxury of its own creative contemplations; is abstracted from the realities of life, and the duties of action; soars above the world, in a mystic region of its own, deaf to the monitions of reason, and the voice of practical piety; and rests contented with the review of its own narrow but absorbing pleasures. This state borders so closely on the influence of superstition, and of the groundless and unreal joys of the fanatic, that it requires to be most carefully guarded against, and vigourously opposed; but if the passion be zealously cultivated, and developed upon principle, and that principle have for its object the great and the good; and if these two attributes be defined by scriptural views of their nature and importance; and if they be detached from the persons we admire, and be fixed exclusively upon their moral virtues; and if admiration of these qualities produce the desire and endeavour to emu-

late them, then will it serve as a beacon to direct, to cheer, to comfort and support in the pursuit after holiness, and in *the end eternal life.*

b. Enthusiasm.

By the term enthusiasm we intend not that state which consists in the fervor of excited feeling, and which betrays itself in inordinate, excessive, and erroneous attention to some merely secondary object; or in exclusive attachment and indiscriminating obedience, to some blind impulse, operative in proportion to our ignorance of its nature and effects; and reckless of the consequences which may result from its indulgence: but in that exaltation of the soul which consists in embracing with ardour, and cherishing with transport, and being influenced in action by the idea we form of the value of an object placed before us for pursuit, and towards the attainment of which we are constantly and powerfully directed. The degree of this enthusiastic energy should ever be proportioned to the *real value* of the boon placed before us as an object of desire; but this is not always the case, since it sometimes happens, that matters of very inferior moment, develop a high degree of enthusiasm in their pursuit; a failing which arises commonly in weak, or ill-educated minds, from permitting passion to govern principle; and from forgetting the noble object of enthusiastic daring, even the subjection of the feelings to the judgment.

Zeal is the principle on which the pursuit of good should be grounded, and this principle when cultivated into passion will form *enthusiasm*. It is true, that zeal may be either true or false; just, or unjust; noble and generous, or ignoble and selfish; its energies may be expended on trifles, and wasted on follies; it may become the undistinguishing slave of party; the patron of abuse because it is *ancient;* as if antiquity of ill had invested it with a sacredness which had deprived it of its primary character; it may be employed on objects of general good, and universal benevolence, or it may characterize the partizan of little, narrow, confined, and selfish views and feelings, emotions which extend not beyond the small circle in which accident, or circumstance, or birth, or connexion, or even locality, and a thousand similar contingencies may have placed him. But these are only proofs, that the original good principle has been acted upon by some debasing cause, and that *all the good* of man's perverted, corrupt, fallen nature is *only evil.* It will be therefore the object of the parent to give a right bias to enthusiasm; to cultivate zeal for worthy objects; to pursue them with intense desire, but to avoid most carefully this waste of mental energy upon low, or sordid, or unworthy designs.

Enthusiasm as applied to religion, is too generally a term of reproach, equivalent perhaps with that of methodist, or evangelical, and applied to those who are really in earnest, in the pursuit of

that which has been declared by the highest authority to be the great business of life; by those who are too *weak* to comprehend what *can* be meant by *energy* in pursuit of moral virtue, and piety, and obedience to the will of Heaven, and active benevolence to their fellow-creatures; and *too wicked*, practically to allow the awful, and heart-stirring sanctions of the Bible, the *good and evil*, which it sets before them, as the result of certain lines of conduct. It is a term which very generally results from the upbraidings of an evil conscience, the sad inheritance of those who know enough to be aware, and to feel that they themselves are not *right*, and to be conscious that the objects of their ridicule, if *sincere*, are really to be envied for their personal peace, the happiness of their enjoyments, and the solidity of their prospects; but they are too much under the influence of evil passion and prejudice to allow this conviction to others; and the convenient term of *enthusiast*, serves to throw a veil of hypothetical discredit, over opinions, and doctrines, and practice grafted upon them, which they cannot impugn by argument, and dare not controvert by a comparison of their effects. It is *good*, to be zealously affected in a *good cause;* therefore the enthusiastic pursuit of religious objects is to be cultivated, to be desired, to be encouraged, to be strengthened, to be perfected.

But every good thing is liable to abuse; every sterling virtue has its counterfeit; and there is such a thing as enthusiasm in religion, which

may be identified with the desire of the hypocrite. But true and false passion are easily distinguished; the one earnestly contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, and zealously strives to live a godly life as its product; the other is very little careful about effects; it will influence its subjects so that they will contend with *vehemence*, and frequently *with ill-temper*, for exclusive views of doctrine, in so far as these form a manifesto of the party under whose banner they have enlisted; they will support with powerful casuistry, and too generally with very little deference to the feelings of others, their own peculiar views of faith and practice, or rather the views of their sect; but they will be very little anxious, about the display of vital religion in their own hearts and lives; they will attach more importance to the manner of performing a religious ceremony, than to the *rite itself;* they will rest in the exterior observance, rather than in the grace which is concealed beneath it; they will stickle for some mode which has been sanctified by custom, and which is a mere excrescence upon Christianity; they will most earnestly contend for religion as a *political* agent, as a *state engine*, and they will support its *political* influence, but they will entirely forget, that its only safety, and its only worth, consists in its influence upon the temper and conduct of numbers; they will place the ban of irreligion upon all those who do not think precisely with themselves; they will strain at gnats and swallow

camels; and *these enthusiasts* are every where to be found, but fully as much in the cloister and the cathedral, as in the poor and ignorant, and because ignorant, less culpable sectary. With the latter, enthusiasm often assumes a grotesque appearance, and places peculiarity of manner and phraseology, and expression, in the room of that principle of true religion, which in the *former* has been supplanted by the decorations and outworks of a more imposing and powerful hierarchy! So true is it, that there is a zeal of God, "but not according to knowledge; for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Romans x. 2, 3.

Besides there is an eagerness in pursuing *good things*, when neither the *real end* to be accomplished, nor the *manner* of attempting it *are good;* there may be a spirited defence of the outworks of Christianity, with very little Christian spirit; the truths of our Holy Religion may be warmly vindicated from the aspersions of speculative infidelity, with the unhallowed fire of practical atheism; the spirit of proselytism may actuate the heart, which remains untouched by the spirit of grace; a crusade against error and false doctrine may be zealously undertaken, when the great *end* of exertion is the exaltation of self, or the acquisition of a reputation for sanctity. Such was the zeal of Jehu, when he exclaimed, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." 2 Kings x. 16.

But in all these cases, it will be seen that the heart is not right with God; that there is a disposition to engraft ostentation upon enthusiasm, to exalt self, and to acquire power and influence *for their own sake.* It is far easier to obtain a character for piety by such a *show of devotion,* than it is by the humble and self-denying duties of the Christian; by striving to mortify evil propensity; by seeking after greater conformity to Christ; by earnestly struggling after a crown of immortality; by well-founded enthusiasm in the service of the Most High!

In general, the influence of this passion is *contagious;* it often operates upon many, almost as an epidemic; it spreads from individual to individual, from house to house, from hamlet to hamlet, from village to village, from town to town, from city to city, from province to province, till it has filled a nation with one enthusiastic emotion; that which originated in an individual has been caught by a neighbour, and propagated to a coterie, and extended in still widening circles, till all hearts beat in unison to the influence of the same agitating thought; till large masses of men think with the same thought, and feel with the same bosom, and act with the same energy; till the mighty spell of slavery is dissolved; till the chains of ignorance and servility have been burst asunder, and the tyrant is disenchanted of his dream of universal power; till the phantom of abject submission to despotic sway has been chased away by the day-star of liberty, and the

reasonable, cheerful obedience of the subject to just laws, and mild, and equitable, paternal, limited monarchy; till the nation is redeemed from the misery of nothingness, and restored to the dignity of man, and the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges, which are consistent with the general good, and compatible with that surrender of individual right, which we all make as free servants to the master, or above all as children to the parent; the submission of feebleness and ignorance to the wise and powerful, in order to obtain that general protection from violence and injustice, which is impossible to man in his individual state.

But if such be the power of *enthusiasm*; and if it be capable of producing a degree of febrile reaction of the soul, it must be carefully guarded; for under the influence of crafty and designing demagogues, it may be converted to the basest of purposes, when the rude rabble's watchword is "*destroy*," and when there is danger lest the noblest institutions of political power and religious instruction, should be crumbled away before the fancied regenerators of democratical licentiousness. It is only necessary to be careful, that the principle be enlisted on the side of *good objects*, and then no fear need be entertained for the result.

The passion of admiration frequently leads to that of enthusiasm; and it is the means by which we most readily develop the latter principle. If we wish to cultivate an enthusiastic ardour after any particular object of pursuit or study, we must

first teach the pupil to take an interest in such object, to admire it, to count it worthy of striving after, and then the labour itself will become a pleasure; the toilsome hours of drudgery will be passed over with alacrity, they will seem but as a few moments, and the fervour of intelligence will be displayed in the enthusiasm of acquisition; an incomprehensible energy will be communicated to the will, which makes the aspirant for knowledge undertake and accomplish that which might have been considered as beyond his power; surmount difficulties which would have appeared insurmountable to the coldness of common, customary, necessary pursuit, and incite to efforts almost incredible to himself. Enthusiasm is the attribute of great and powerful and privileged minds; it communicates to the soul a higher degree of intelligence, to take in larger, and juster, and more general views of men and things; it increases the capacity for action and exertion; it raises the tone of the human mind above the common level of every day thought; it gives a higher degree of eloquence to passion, and more tenderness to feeling; it enlists success under its banner; it gives point to benevolence and energy to action; it is that powerful principle which enables the mind to overcome its repugnance to the disagreeable circumstances which accompany every pursuit of importance, and enables it to lose sight of difficulty, in the hope, the confidence of success; and forms a groundwork for retrospective pleasure, in reviewing the impediments which have

been surmounted, and the dangers from which we have escaped, and the listless inanity from which we have been aroused; it exists even in old age, in the bosom of him "who shoulders his crutch, and shews how fields were won," or of him who justly attributes his present attainments and pleasures to the enthusiasm of his younger days, which enabled him to accomplish in a short period, that for which mere reason and argument would have required an undefined portion of time, and would have left unfinished at the last; it is the genius of poetry, and the soul of music; the hidden mystery by which the power of song claims its pre-eminent influence; the genial radiance, which warms without scorching, and vivifies without exhausting, all which it environs. Such is enthusiasm; and such are the principles by which its agency is to be promoted and its exuberance repressed. We now turn to a class of social passions, more particularly arising out of the opinion which we form of the character of others, and of the feeling we consequently entertain towards them.

Section XII. *Of Esteem—of Respect—of Consideration.*

a. Esteem.

Esteem, when justly founded, and divested of the morbid influence of prejudice and self-love, is a tribute of moral approbation offered to an assemblage of qualities and virtues, which are calculated to widen and confirm the connecting links of social relation; it is offered to the man who makes a good use of his understanding and distinguished talents; to him whose character is remarkable for uprightness of intention; whose inflexible justice is superior to the influence of prejudice, and beyond the reach of suspicion; whose beneficence is widely extended, and knows no other limit than that of the actual misery which surrounds him, and of his power to relieve it; whose compassion is ever ready to be extended to the sick, and the poor, and the miserable; the measure of whose generosity is that alone of his ability to support it; whose sincerity is unquestioned; whose veracity is unimpeached; whose fidelity to his promises is vouched for by years of punctual performance of his engagements; whose modesty in success, and contentment under disappointment give him a claim to the attention and imitation of his compeers; who is active in doing good, prudent in difficulties, fervent in desire, grateful for assistance, patient in adversity, meekly suffering the obloquy of the world, energetic in the pursuit of

good, and inflexible to the allurements of evil. These are they who have a claim upon our esteem; but they do not always receive it, for it is often inequitably distributed, and refused to modest and substantial *merit*, while it is bestowed upon frivolous, but brilliant *success*. Yet *esteem* should be apportioned *to worth*, and success should be *no criterion of its meed*.

Nothing can be more injurious to the cause of virtue and religion, or more unjust to individuals, than the habit of judging of their title to *esteem* from their *prosperity*. A very little observation will convince the unprejudiced, that success attaches rather to manner than to desert; and that it will be more readily secured by the yielding individual whose habits, and opinions, and principles, are of that unsettled and ill-defined nature, that they admit of being construed, or misconstrued, as occasion may serve, into the *habits*, and *opinions*, and *principles* of every shade of character, with which he may stand associated; whose feelings catch the inspiration of the moment, and learn to court the favouring breeze of custom, the trade wind of fashion; or whose mental manifestations are cast into that plastic mould, that they will readily assume every shape and form, be expanded to the widest stretch of ultra-liberality, or contracted to the narrowest sphere of vision of the most confirmed bigotry. These are they who are most certain of success, and for this plain reason, that a selfish world loves to be courted by the seeming appro-

bation of its views and plans, or flattered into self-complacency, or indulged with the imitation of others; and that it *will give its good things* to those who will thus approve, and flatter, and indulge; who will smile upon its obliquities, soften and extenuate its palpable wanderings, soothe and decorate its passions with some soft, delusive term, and confirm it in its good opinion of itself, by the weight of *their* influence. *They* who will be all things to all men; who possess the power and the will of accommodation; who will smile, and bow, and cringe; who will throw the veil of indifference over their principles; and will obscure their perceptions by the film of interest: they on whose countenances the sleek smile of perpetual favour rests, and whose brow is never wrinkled by the pain of offended virtue: these are they on whose footsteps treads hastily the fiend of success; but these are not they who are *deserving* of esteem. It is indeed true, that substantial merit will very generally work its way into notice, and even to success, if it be of a rare and extraordinary quality; but it will still form an exception to that general rule, which confers prosperity on those who will assimilate most readily with the unsound maxims of the world, and who will least disturb its peace, by the tacit censure of *their* own example, of *their* adherence to principle, of *their* love of virtue, of *their* devotion to piety. It is also true, that in the former instance, success is really dependent upon *esteem*—the *esteem* of the world; but then, that opinion

is formed by comparing the character, with their own convenient standard of applause or reprobation, and not with the unchanging law of God, and the unbending forms of principle deduced from its requirements. It is very necessary that children should entertain just notions on this subject, or they will soon learn to act, so as to secure the favour of others, "rather than the testimony of conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they have had their conversation in the world." 2 Corinthians i. 12.

But again, the principle of esteem is not to be awarded to external advantages. The rich, the noble, the learned, the prosperous, are not, *as such*, objects of this passion! It is only in proportion as they make a good use of the gifts of fortune; it is only as these are employed in relieving the sum of human misery, and in increasing the amount of present happiness, diminishing ignorance, and extending the knowledge of God: it is only in proportion as the adventitious circumstances of birth, or station, or patronage are employed to augment the worth of society; to encourage the humble, the diffident, and the deserving; to sanction the efforts of virtue, and repress the luxuriance of vice, the prominence of pride, the pertness of envy, the pretensions of emptiness, and the clamours of vain-glorious selfishness: it is only as talent and learning are devoted to the good of others, and to the glory of God; as they minister to the extension of

moral worth, and become the hand-maids of religion; it is only as prosperity contributes to render its possessors more humble, and teachable, and child-like; more dependent upon God; more anxious to be consecrated to his service; more strictly conformed to his will; more desirous of avoiding every suspicious or doubtful compliance; more inflexible to ill: and it is only as these substantial traits of character are attached to the exterior advantages of literature, that even such are deserving of esteem; for what saith the Scripture? "Will he esteem thy riches? No, not gold, nor all the forces of strength." Proverbs xxxvi. 10. And if these be lightly thought of by Omniscience, how can they be held in esteem by those who desire to be like God?

Esteem, then, should be the result of a species of *moral* value, the estimate of virtue, the *specific gravity* of certain possessions, in relation to a knowledge of the will of the Most High, and of obedience to his commands. It is highly necessary that this estimate should be made in reference to some fixed and unchanging standard; or *self-love* will often erect its own views and feelings into the test of worth, and purity, and excellence; yet let "nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Philippians ii. 3. Thus, a just and humble estimate of self, is the first step in the process of forming correct opinions of the moral worth of others; and this is

the clue which will guide the young to a proper use of this passion, and save them from the sorrows of selfishness, or the misery of disappointed expectation.

Esteem is less vivid in its impression than friendship; the one results rather from the deliberate estimate of the *amount of good* in the character, the other depends more upon that form of benevolent influence which expends its energies upon social regard and affection, irrespective of the ties of blood, or of conventional relationship. Thus *esteem* may exist independently of love or friendship; but it is the *first link* in the moral chain which terminates in the latter, and neither friendship nor love can exist without it: we *may* esteem those we do not love, but we *cannot love* those whom we do not *esteem;* and indeed so entirely necessary is this association, that the *distinction* of esteem is the subversion of friendship; and by it the purest love is changed into compassion only. How important, then, is this principle in passing through life, to love nothing which cannot be esteemed, to form no friendship with him whose character bears not the impress of moral value, and to esteem nothing but for itself, its intrinsic worth, its useful application here, its relation to eternal happiness hereafter. But there are causes which impede the just estimate of worth and character. Self-love induces us frequently to choose a low standard of comparison, and to substitute the ever varying hues of *natural disposition* for the dictates of eternal truth, thus

assuming, as the maximum of moral excellence, a state which may be influenced by circumstances, or modified by feeling, or perverted by disease, or rendered erroneous by defect of judgment, or changed by time, or exhausted by fatigue; a state, indeed, which admits not of fixedness, or of those just and solid, and immutable prescriptions which can alone confer a title to be received as a standard of comparison, and which can only flow from *Him* who is truth, and justice, and mercy.

Again, passion, prejudice, our own opinion, and that of others whom *we know and wish to esteem*, and the factitious wants of an artificial state of society, all tend to the perversion of this principle. Thus anger, occasioned by some trifling collision of interest, inseparable from the existing order of our social institutions; ambition which disparages its rivals; the fear, that *others* will secure to themselves a reputation for which *we* sigh; the hope of success to which the good and great qualities of competitors may be an obstacle; envy, when we contemplate the high consideration of their virtues; the enthusiastic admiration of some splendid talent, or some advantageous situation; jealousy over the just claims of those who run in the same race; all these, and other circumstances, present so many obstacles to justice and impartiality in forming our judgment. The influence of preconceived opinion and groundless prejudice, also operate unfavourably: they teach us to be insincere in our wish to arrive at

truth; lead to self-deception; allow the perverting influence of vanity; foster the distorted views of pride; tempt us to ridicule what we hope not to emulate, and dare not attempt to impugn; destroy the balance of justice, and teach us to be impatient of inquiry; fond of flattering ourselves, and of withholding the due meed of praise from others. And to all this may be added, the veil which is drawn over ourselves and society in general, by the institutions of an artificial politeness, which invests follies, and even sometimes vices, with the seeming garb of approbation, and eventually leads us to be doubtful of, and even careless as to the real limits of virtue. These are some of the difficulties in the way of our forming a just judgment of our equals, and which make us ungenerous in the distribution of our esteem; a principle, which is only valuable as it is the fruit of profound and enlightened conviction; a passion which can alone be exercised with advantage, in proportion as moral education shall have placed it upon *this only* basis; shall have taught it the errors to which its unassisted efforts are liable, and shall have preserved it from the influence of those deviations from rectitude, which are the result of hasty opinion, injurious feeling, or inconsiderate judgment.

b. Respect.

Respect is the expressed or tacit avowal of our consciousness of the high standing of the in-

dividual to whom it is offered, and generally of his pre-eminence over *ourselves.* When it proceeds upon a just principle, and with correct views, it should originate in *esteem,* and consequently *moral worth* should be its peculiar object; and then it would ever be, as it ought to be, a species of homage rendered to the superiority of virtue, and required by the dignity of the *good* man, however poor, however cruelly the sport of fortune, however deprived of social or political power.

Such, however, is the state of society, that respect has greatly ceased to be paid to sterling worth, and has been offered to the influence exerted by riches, birth, rank, connexions, patronage, and other circumstances, which give to man considerable power over the feelings, emotions, and interests of his fellow-men; however worthless may be the private character, however little entitled to consideration. Perhaps this morbid tendency is felt more particularly in a commercial nation, where riches always give importance, and where they oftener fall to the lot of little minds, uncultivated, yet highly esteeming themselves on account of their wealth, and of the honour it accumulates upon them. Respect, notwithstanding, is justly paid to the advantages of rank and situation; for we are commanded to " honour the king, to render honour to whom honour is due, to submit to all in authority under him, to render due respect to the powers that be." And this we should do without scrupulously inquiring into

their private character. Respect is claimed by their public station, though it will be found upon inquiry that this very feeling proceeds upon the *supposition of their worth;* and hence the very guarded provision of our laws, that the supreme of the executive government, the king can do no wrong; his influence with his people is the influence of worth; and this principle must be preserved inviolate in a free country, where he reigns for the good and the happiness of his subjects.

Again, respect is paid to the majesty of intellectual acquisition; to the power of a strong mind; to those who have united to originally great and well cultivated talents, a habit of acute observation, and who have treasured up and arranged the results of their many notices of men and things, and have digested them into a system of experience: it is offered to those who have proved themselves wise in counsel, and prudent in advice, and indefatigable in action; it is involuntarily yielded to the silvery locks of old age, and is not withheld from the feebleness of decrepitude, and the decay of what once was mental power; and especially, if to the reverential awe of age be added the dignity of the parental character, and the sage maxims of parental solicitude; it is extorted by the contemplation of illustrious personages, who by a reverse of fortune have fallen from the pinnacle of power, and influence, and greatness, their opportunities of commanding respect, and the daily increase of flatterers and dependents; and are now experiencing

the wretchedness of poverty, the cruelty of misfortune, the neglect of abandoned favourites, the contumely of former friends, the cruel scorn of more successful votaries of the one god of their idolatrous worship, Ambition; and it is given to individuals who have been ruined by misfortune, who from having been surrounded by affluence and splendour, have been suddenly reduced to indigence, and have drained the cup of misery to its last dregs. Yet in all these instances, it will be seen, however it may be concealed by circumstances, that one uniform character pervades every situation; and that it is the *possession*, or at least the *supposition* of moral worth which excites the feeling of respect; a connexion which must never be lost sight of in education.

There is, however, an error in this matter, and particularly in the application of the epithet *respectable*, and its corresponding emotion; for while respect is often expressed as the phraseology of politeness, without any corresponding emotion of truth, it is sometimes withheld from those who though poor in this world's goods, are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. It is offered to the powerful and prosperous, and refused to the disciples of Him who was hungry, and thirsty, and a stranger, and naked, and sick, and in prison. Its essence is made to consist in the exterior symbols of attention to those in power, instead of in giving meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, and protection to the houseless, and clothing to the naked, and visiting

the sick, and administering to the prisoner. And this may very generally be traced to the early misapplication of the term *respectable;* for error in language will almost surely lead to fallacious opinion, unjust judgment, and obliquity of conduct. Children are too frequently taught to consider those persons only as respectable, who are placed in a certain situation of society, and surrounded with specific external advantages, instead of affixing the epithet only to the attributes of moral character and conduct. It is for parents to watch most carefully over this germ of erroneous and unjust conclusion. God "had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." And wherefore? Not surely because the Lord disapproved of the sacrifice of fruits and flowers, and accepted only the firstling of the flock; not surely because of any exterior difference in the situation of the two brothers, but because the one was an offering of *sincerity* and *truth,* while the other was a merely external form of service, wanting the sanction of the heart; for "if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door!" Gen. iv. 4, 6, 7. God is no respecter of persons; "for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." Deuteronomy x. 17. And again, we are enjoined not to have respect to persons, and are taught that those who do thus, do not fulfil the royal law

of loving their neighbour as themselves, but that "they commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." James ii. 9. And where such a consequence is to be apprehended, surely the parent will require no other stimulus to exertion, no argument to prove its necessity!

c. Consideration.

By the term consideration we intend the weight of character, which an individual obtains from the exercise of virtuous principles and feelings; and the *situation* in which he is placed in society, *by that integrity of conduct*, which excites our esteem, commands our respect, and inspires us with other honourable sentiments towards himself, *the aggregate* of which forms the manifestation of the present passion. It constitutes an immediate reward to the exercise of virtue: for it is afforded to *real worth*, and is that faculty by which we place the man in a certain prominence of observation, and propose his example for our imitation: we consider his ways, and copy his example; we are influenced by his opinions; we are biassed by his judgment; we sympathize with his feelings; we make common cause with his views; and are governed by his practice. The good man aims to obtain it, not indeed as the reward of conduct; but he strives that his actions may deserve it, and cherishes it as a stimulus to future exertion; a motive which is deepened by a comparison of the consideration in which he is held by others, with the certainty of the knowledge of

his own heart, of how little he is entitled to the approbation of his fellow men, and how much less of *Him*, who knows every thought; a review by which he is humbled, and aroused to fresh energy in the way of following *his* commandments.

Consideration may be misapplied, and it frequently is so, though not so often as respect; since it attaches itself more to solid worth, and less to the small dust of the balance of exterior circumstances. It is perhaps the passion above all others, which is most dependent upon reason; for it rests mainly on the exercise of principle, and has inherent in its nature, so *little* of heart-stirring emotion, that it might be almost termed a virtue: and yet upon investigation, it will appear to be compounded of passion, and to be acted upon by other passions, in such a manner as to demonstrate their affinities. The great object of education is to regulate its application by just views; and above all, to prepare the young mind to receive its influence with modesty and diffidence, and to know and to feel, that it deserves not the consideration in which it is held by its fellow-men; and consequently, that it may acknowledge its own sinfulness, and need of repentance; its own worthlessness, and need of a Saviour; its own helplessness and impotence, without the assistance of the Spirit of grace.

The possession of consideration does not excite envy, because it is enjoyed without *pride*, and would be quickly lost, if its possessor yielded to the ostentatious influence of self-esteem. The

proud, the envious, the selfish, the passionate, the avaricious, the ambitious, the unprincipled, the timid, the irresolute, the undecided and wavering, the vacillating and unstable, the malevolent and revengeful, the insincere and mendacious, the vain, the ignorant, the intemperate, the indolent, the unjust, the ungrateful, the impatient, the irritable, the frivolous, the unmeaning, the dissipated, and the thoughtless, are not, or at least, *ought* not to become objects of consideration, which in its genuine application, is afforded only to *worth!!*

That deserved reputation therefore which entitles man to receive the meed of this passion, is the first fortune of the individual; it is dearer to him than life itself, which ceases to be valuable, when it is no longer worthy of consideration: it is of more consequence than riches and honour, since these can confer no lasting benefit; since they may be lost in an instant, and leave their former possessors without a claim to notice, or even the means of subsistence; while on the contrary, the man of reputation possesses an exhaustless mine which survives misfortune; he never can be destitute; his character commands respect; his wants ensure attention; and his misfortunes inspire commiseration; while in the last moments of extreme exigence, he still retains a boon which he devolves upon his offspring, and which to them will be better than silver or gold.

It is necessary to make a distinction between slowly obtained *consideration*, the result of princi-

pled, and long tried reputation, and that *renown* which is frequently produced by adventitious circumstances, and is often awarded to the empiricism of impudent success: the former is the clear and steady light of day; the latter is the brilliant meteor which dazzles for a moment, and is soon lost in the obscurity of night. However conducive to his immediate interests, it will be found, that he who challenges renown, will become the favourite of a circle, only to share the fate of all favourites, to lose his power, and to sink lower into nothingness than his real station. *Renown* may be acquired without a single virtue, or a good quality of any kind: *celebrity* which approaches nearer to consideration, may be the reward of talent and of intellectual attainment, without any regard to the quality of its pursuits, or to the utility of their application; it may be most undeservedly conferred by the favouring gale of patronage; but consideration is yielded to merit only—to often proved and solid worth; it is obtained less by the gifts of genius and the attributes of mind, than by the sterling qualities of the heart; it is afforded to the consistently good man, however humble his situation, however unassuming his pretensions, while it is withheld from the man of learning, and science, and distinction, whose conduct is not irreproachable; it is yielded to piety in the shade of retirement, and even in the night of adversity; while it is denied to the wicked in prosperity, to him who forgets God, and is unmindful of his fel-

lows. And since the individuals who deserve it are comparatively few; and since the first emotions of the passion are so quickly extinguished by so many qualities which are not only tolerated in the present state of society, but even pass current as the common materials of every day intercourse, and are fostered, and encouraged by the daily occasions of life,—so are the opportunities for its exercise unfrequent; the virtues which produce it are *rare*, and in proportion to their scarcity, so are they highly esteemed, and the *consideration* which results from their exercise is the more deeply valued.

Consideration is inapplicable to *youth;* the character in early life has not been sufficiently tried as that it may be relied upon for steadiness of principle; and in extreme old age, the torpor of selfishness insensibly steals over the activity of duty, entwines itself around the trunk of utility, and well nigh strangles its last efforts, so that it loses, in a measure, its title to that *consideration* which is, for the most part, awarded to middle life; to the maturity of the judgment; to the government of the passions; to the fulness of intellectual ability; to the intensity and correctness of feeling; to the activity of benevolent enterprize; and, above all, to the unwearied and *useful* consistency of good principle, and that principle employed to the glory of God, and the good of his creatures.

There is another reason for this result: in early life, man is not so sensible of the worth of reputa-

tion, as to give himself much trouble in seeking to obtain it; his principal aim is to render himself *agreeable,* and if he succeed in doing this to the world *at large,* it will be by a sacrifice of the *consideration* of its better part. But when the vanity of an attractive exterior has subsided; and the desire to please has given way to the earnest hope, the constant aim and struggle to be *useful;* when the fondness for gratifying others has been superseded by the wish of improving them; when the ostentation of display, and the desire of exhibiting talents and acquirements have been supplanted by the principled intention of occasioning those around us, to reap the benefits of our maturity, to gather the fruits of our knowledge, and to derive the advantage of our long stored, and well-arranged observations upon men and things: in fact, when man seeks to be known and distinguished by reasonable ideas, just views, prudent feelings, subdued passions, and virtuous, noble, honourable, and pious principles; and moreover, when he is anxious that the influence of these feelings and principles should be operative upon his social circle; then it is that he is entitled to *consideration;* a passion which he should delight to exercise towards others, as well as be delighted to receive from them, and seek constantly to deserve. It is indeed true, that this is sometimes erroneously bestowed; it is usurped by those who are entitled to the semblance of virtues, whose actual exercise should alone confer it, or who possess the faculty of dissembling their incapacity, and

want of desert, together with their destitution of all title to this perfection of esteem. Hence the necessity of teaching the young to form a just estimate of the value of opinion!

Man should neither be a slave to the judgment of others, nor utterly regardless of their views. Many causes operate to render the result of opinion uncertain and unjust. Passion, prejudice, fashion, example, all tend to shew the want of reliance upon its conclusions. At the same time, it must be allowed, that *opinion*, if left to itself, will in the main be right, and in the long run will come round to the side of common sense, and truth, and justice, and reason. However, distorted for a time, it will at length generally assume that rectitude of view, which gives it value and importance. Opinion, when it contravenes any portion of the revealed will of God, or is inconsistent with the spirit of Christ's religion is plainly not to be valued, nor admitted as worthy of consideration. But *within this limit*, the settled judgment of our fellows is valuable and desirable. It is not to be assumed as a *motive* to action, but it may be useful as a guide and directrix, provided always, that it be not inconsistent with any known and established principles. To be careless of public opinion implies a recklessness of feeling, which is not *the result* of a just appreciation of the judgment of others, and of an appeal to the great Searcher of hearts; but rather a consciousness of the incorrectness of our own character, and a low estimation of the attributes of mind generally; to be con-

stantly changing our views according to those with whom we are surrounded, is to show that we possess no steady principle; but to defer to the opinion of large masses of mankind, to deliberate, to weigh, to estimate before we act, is to shew a just sense of the degree of value to be *attached* to public opinion, and an anxiety to escape from singularity; at the same time, declaring a resolute adherence to principle, and a determination not to sacrifice moral duty to obtain its suffrage; nor to comply with the prejudices of others, nor to countenance their follies, nor to dissemble our own views, nor to blink a result arising from these premises; to value opinion only as it is consistent with truth; to rise above it when its influence is prejudicial; to seek its improvement, and change its character, where it seems to have taken too low a standard of comparison.

Section XIII. *Of Contempt.*

Contempt is applied for the most part to the individual who derogates from the dignity of man, as a rational, intellectual, and moral creature; who debases or perverts his reason; prostitutes his intellect, and turns aside from the uprightness of propriety into the devious paths of chicanery, intrigue, and the interested substitution of present or political expediency, for that sense of

justice, that principle of integrity which would sacrifice every personal feeling, every selfish emotion, every temporary advantage, rather than yield one atom of unbending truth. Contempt is poured upon the head of him who violates the laws of honour, whose word is not to be trusted, who has broken his promise, escaped from his engagements, forfeited his title to sincerity, or flagrantly failed in the performance of the duties enjoined by the social compact. It is also visited upon those who have been degraded by open and shameless vice; it is accumulated upon the idle, the intemperate, the ungrateful, the faithless, and the unprincipled. This passion isolates the individual who is its object; separates him from his compeers, and leaves him in hopeless obscurity; or associates him with a group of others, who are all hasting to the gloomy night of infamy. It is practically a solitary punishment, for contempt will hardly drag into notice the individual whom it scorns; it scarcely considers him as deserving so much notice, and rather fixes upon him the indelible brand, which will pursue him through life, and which will leave a blot upon his memory that will be handed down to his posterity.

Contempt is employed in punishing the avaricious and ungrateful, the impostor and the hypocrite, the selfish, the traitor to society, the betrayer of friendship, the violator of confidence, the calumniator of the innocent, the insidious disturber of the peace and good order of the relative compact. It is supplementary to human

laws, and extends its jurisdiction where they cannot reach. The object of legislative enactments, is the punishment of the more flagrant evil-doer; of him who by overt acts threatens the life or property of others; but the agency of contempt is poured upon the exertion of a similar *principle*, in little acts of moral larceny, which escape the vigilance of human jurisdiction. It operates immediately upon the principle of self-love, and hence its influence is severely felt; they whose hearts are not hardened by the destitution of feeling, despise themselves, and sink into the obscurity of the dark night of shame, from which they never find a way of escape, through the shades which they have drawn around them; others may struggle against its weight; they may affect to be above its reach; they may assume to act, and think, and feel, as though they were not the subjects of this passion; but contempt is not thus to be evaded; it sits immovably upon the character; no opposition can dislodge it; it is a perpetual source of sorrow, a dead weight, whose constant operation will be to sink the man in his own esteem, as well as in the judgment of others; he is *not to be trusted;* he is shunned therefore as the deadly viper, lest his sting may be implanted in some unconscious moment; he loses the conviction of his fair reputation in society; and with fearful upbraidings, and bitter retrospects, and cruel anticipations; neglected by all, tormented by passion, and torn by conscience, he approaches his last hour, and

sinks unregretted, without a hand to smooth his pillow of sickness, or to close the eye of approaching insensibility. It is a dreadful punishment, a fearful retribution, and the exercise of the passion in Christian education, demands much caution.

If it were possible, to feel contempt only for the positive baseness, and not towards the *base*, it would be well; but the fact is precisely the contrary, for the object of this passion is rather *the person* than *the thing;* at least the feeling of the mind, however excited by the quality of action is certainly directed towards the individual. And this is a very questionable state; for first, we become the judges of conduct, and proceed to inflict punishment for delinquency; and this is not in the spirit of that religion which forbids us to judge others; which relies upon the justice and judgment of its divine Author; and which confidently reposes the punishment of guilt, with him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who has declared his hatred of sin, and has promised the fury of his wrath against transgressors.

Christianity enjoins us to be forgiving, compassionate, tender-hearted, pitiful, long-suffering, and merciful, states of feeling and of principle, to which the passion of contempt is *inimical.* Our blessed Lord himself, as he drew near to the close of his ministry, after having experienced the contumely of the Jews; after having witnessed their ignorance, blindness, hardness of

heart, and determined rejection of himself; after having suffered from their scoffing, their cruel injustice, and their bitter and unfounded calumnies; and well knowing that the measure of their crimes was not yet full, and that it would be shortly augmented by the destruction of himself; yet ventured not an expression of contempt, for that *impotent rage, above which* he soared the God triumphant; "but when he was come near, he beheld the city, and *wept* over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things, which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes! For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in, on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke xix. 41—44.

And since *here* is the distinct punishment of sin, of criminality beyond the reach of human laws, of that base ingratitude and hypocrisy, that selfishness, that treason to the friend of sinners, that violation of confidence, that calumny, that faithlessness and unprincipled conduct, and that obstinate rejection of proffered mercy, which are the peculiar objects of this passion, and yet without a *single* expression of contempt, but merely the reluctant award of inflexible justice, attended by the tear of compassion; we have the highest sanction both of precept and example, for assert-

ing, that the development of this passion in Christian education requires the most scrupulous and nice attention. Far be it from us to relax in any measure, the hatred of sin, the recoil from all that is base and dishonourable; but we would cut out the canker from the rose, and leave the healthy flower untouched; we would fastidiously strip the strangling ivy from the oak, but we would preserve inviolate the integrity of the majestic stem around which it twines; we would separate the evil from the individual; we *would not spare* the former, but we *would compassionate* the latter.

Dangerous as is the uncontrouled agency of this passion, its original destination was manifestly to raise the tone of the mind, above the love, or even the toleration of that which is base, to save it from coinciding with folly, or from resting contented with the inanity of ignorance. And while its common agency is to be most carefully watched, *good* may arise from directing its operations into their intended channel, and from witnessing its efforts on the world around us. However contempt may be sometimes *poured* upon the good, because they are poor and ignorant, by those who think they "are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," (Revelations iii. 17;) however it may be fastened upon peculiarity of manner, in order to discredit the influence of good principles; yet in general, its

distribution is more justly porportioned to the amount of baseness of character, and as such its award is commonly lasting, and extends even beyond the present generation. It is indeed true that *prejudice* has much to do, with the *application* of the principle to *families and posterity*. But so it is, that the influence of this unwritten judgment of others' actions, is felt by immediate relatives, and even by remote connexions. We receive into our families and confidence, with great doubt and suspicion, those, whose nearest relatives have been branded by the mark of contempt; a whole family suffers for the misconduct of an individual; children for their parents; brothers and sisters for each other; and even friends and acquaintance for the delinquencies of those with whom they have been associated.

Before forming a new acquaintance, it is natural to inquire the connexions of the party; and if we trace these to an individual, who has incurred the contempt of infamy, we hesitate,—we more than hesitate; we retire within ourselves; we exercise the strictest caution; we close the door of our hearts; and at all events, suspend *intimacy*, until we have tried the character, and found it sterling. This taint is hereditary, and is operative to many generations from that in which it has taken place; the bend sinister is not to be removed; the value of good ancestors can scarcely be sufficiently appreciated; while the stigma of infamy is with difficulty even veiled, for it will live far longer than the memory

of that which is honourable and upright. The same feeling meets the eye in the idea of organic predisposition; nothing is more common than the belief that certain vices occur more frequently in particular families; and hence the conviction, that the descendants of an attainted individual, *may have* a peculiar tendency to a similar form of degraded propensity. Whether this feeling be just or unjust; whether it be founded on experience, or whether it rest merely as an opinion of prejudice, its existence is undeniable, and its operation should be a stimulus to upright conduct, and a guarantee for correct example, even when the influence of higher and better principles may not be prominent. And while personal and family consideration are really objects of worthy pursuit; and personal and family dishonour are to be dreaded and deprecated, the agency of contempt upon ourselves and our children, may be rendered available as an additional motive and incentive to noble, generous, upright action. While then the operation of contempt upon our own hearts, and upon our conduct towards others, is to be avoided and counteracted, we should equally strive not to become its subjects,—not to give to others occasion to speak reproachfully: for if we do well, and suffer for it, we are happy; but if we are branded for evil-doing, we must not only bear our own burden, but it will be devolved for us, upon our innocent posterity.

The principle of *scorn* is very analogous to that of contempt; it is however rather a diminutive of

this passion, and is applicable more to conduct than to persons; so an individual may scorn to commit a base action, without feeling contempt for him, whom by so doing, he would resemble. But there is a sense, in which the term scorn does not admit of this favourable construction; and in which it forms the evidence of an awful state of alienation from God; a thoughtlessness of futurity, a hardness of heart, from which the long-resisted spirit seems to have departed. The scorner is one who disbelieves, or affects to disbelieve, the revelation of the will of God; one who scorns to be thought in earnest about religion; one who mocks at the punishment of sin, and the threatenings and judgments denounced against it by the infinitely holy law of God; one who derides reproof,—"a scorner heareth not rebuke;" (Proverbs xiii. 1.) one who foolishly trusts to his own powers and knowledge, and refuses the instruction of the Most High; one who rests in the acquisitions of intellect, and despises the foolishness of the gospel of Christ; "who seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not;" (Proverbs xiv. 6.) one who hateth him that reproveth him,—"a scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go unto the wise;" (Proverbs xvi. 12.) one who scoffs at the principles of religion, and contemns the restraint of moral obligation, as connected with a principle of purity and love to God; one who rejects the word of God, and if he do not openly profess a disbelief in its truth, yet avowedly refuses to be

guided and governed by its influence; one who is even an abomination among men, and who, having cast off the fear of God, and obtained the highest degree of daring, has become a monster of iniquity, without a single restraint to preserve him from the fell influence of that demoniacal possession, under which he appears to brave the danger of hereafter, and deliberately to prefer the pleasures of the moment, while he sneers at the idea of a future day of punishment. "Surely he scorneth the scorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly. The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools." "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it. Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools." Proverbs iii. 34, 35. ix. 12. xix. 29. So constantly is scorn placed in apposition with the *folly* of the Scriptures, which is intended for the absence of that wisdom which is from above, and for the influence of that which is from below, and which is earthly, sensual, devilish. Parents have to guard against the first risings of this evil principle, and then will they be saved from witnessing the misery of its development: their line of duty is obvious, and needs no comment to explain,—no argument to enforce its observance.

Section XIV. *Of Patriotism.*

In the present age of insubordination, and when the love of country is so frequently supplanted by the dislike of constraint, and the impulse of lawless desire on the one hand, or when it is contracted into a doating fondness for the merely exterior apparatus of civil government, it is highly necessary to cultivate and educate this passion upon just principles, and with consistent views. The existence of civil government—of a provision for the maintenance of individual right, and safety, and comfort; and the arrangements which have been made for religious instruction, must be contemplated as a great boon, in exchange for which we are called upon to sacrifice some portion of selfish inclination, as well as some pecuniary contributions towards its support.

Patriotism does not consist in the love of country, because it is our own; but in a well founded attachment to those laws, and those civil and religious institutions, which are congenial with the better spirit of the people, and calculated to make them happy, and wise, and good. Different countries possess varying advantages; their forms of government; their moral and religious institutions differ; and it is not for us to say, ours is the very best, or that it is not so good as another; that will be found to be the best which is best suited to the genius of the people, and which will

secure to them the largest portion of advantage with the smallest possible privation; provided only that it be consistent with their individual habits of thought, and feeling, and action; and compatible with their happiness and welfare.

Patriotism does not consist in being blind to the faults, and errors, and corruptions which are inseparable from long-established governments; nor in the defence of the most flagrant abuses, merely because they have been engrafted upon that which is good, and have been sanctified by time and custom; but it does consist in acknowledging the principle of obedience, and of love too, in spite of blemishes which it discovers tenderly, which it cannot cherish, and which it dares not remove with a rude unskilful hand; and it does consist in recollecting that national errors are made up of individual conduct, and in setting a good example of uprightness and fidelity, and disinterestedness. A government should be paternal; and the love and obedience of subjects should be analogous to that of children for their parents. Now we know, that although children will be influenced by the example of their parents, yet the situation of the former implies a deference to the authority of the latter; submission to superior judgment, confidence in their integrity, and the ready yielding of a wish to be acquainted with the reason of every part of their conduct. And so it is with a paternal government; we cannot see the reason and ground for

every minute arrangement; but we are not thence to infer, that it is *unreasonable* or corrupt; on the contrary, we are to assume that it *is right*, because such is the general character of its conduct. Again, patriotism does not consist in turgid declamation on the advantages of our own government, accompanied, as it frequently is, by the studied desire to evade its imposts in every possible way: but it *does* consist in a steady support of its principles, and in an adherence to its laws, and to those pecuniary sacrifices which it asks for its support. Selfishness too commonly exists as the motive to action, and is only thinly veiled by empty professions. Neither does the love of our country consist in finding out all her corruptions, all her symptoms of decay, all the fungi which have grown upon her surface, as the marks and evidence of a venerable old age; all the tangible points on which she might be improved; but it does consist in loving her still, notwithstanding all her faults, and in affording the best possible support to her institutions.

That is not patriotism, but bigotry, which invests our own country with every excellence, and allows of *none* to any other form of government; but it is right to esteem our own country more highly, because its institutions are better suited to the genius of the people than any other.

Patriotism consists farther in doing all we can to promote the interests, and welfare, and happiness of our country and its inhabitants; in

diffusing that righteousness which exalteth a nation, and in opposing that sin which is the reproach of any people; in augmenting the moral value of the nation at large; in diffusing knowledge as the best antidote of irreligion, and infidelity, and that disaffection which has assailed us at every point, from the mistaken senator, the popular orator, the pulpit, and the press; and in every form from the goodly quarto to the small, but not inoperative ballad or penny book. The patriot has the work of a life before him: every day will bring its duty; for every day he should be himself better; he should be trying to make others so; and in so doing, he will be promoting the welfare, honour, respectability, and real worth of his country. "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." Psalm cxliv. 15. A principled attachment, not a blind impulse, is genuine patriotism; neither is it a vehement passion, though it may be sometimes found to exist as such; and the evils attendant upon this sightless impetus, are to be traced in its ungoverned influence, producing that form of insanity termed *Nostalgia*, particularly prevalent among the Swiss; during the paroxysms of which they have been known to leap from their vessels into the sea, under the impression that they were plunging into the green fields of their native vallies. A *moral nostalgia* may be frequently observed; an unconquerable desire for the realization of utopian plans

which are impossible, and which hurries onward its victims to the destruction of themselves, and of the fabric of society which surrounds them. But strengthen the reason, and fix the passion on the firm basis of principle, and the pupil will become a patriot, and a philanthropist, and will steer equally clear of besotted admiration on the one hand, and of cold, miscalculating, selfish faction on the other.

CHAP. XVI.

VIRTUES AND VICES.

SECTION I. *On Veracity and Sincerity—on Falsehood.*

THE essential properties of truth and falsehood lie at the very basis of all character; and according to the prevalence of the one or the other, constitute the good or the bad man; for they are diametrically opposed and their most perfect examples are to be found in *Him* who was the *Truth*, and in him who was, and is, the father of lies. The man of truth is sincere, candid, ingenuous, upright, he "that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not;" while the hypocrite and the flatterer, are unjust, disingenuous, deceivers, faithless, dissemblers, untrue. We love and admire the one, while we fear, distrust, and doubt the other; we fully confide in the former, but we cautiously and jealously watch over the latter: a virtue and a vice, so influential in themselves, so fraught with important consequences, cannot be overlooked in Christian education. A character

which is disingenuous and insincere, one which is not upright in his motives and principles of action, one which does not fear to tell a lie or to deceive whenever such an abandonment of truth will promote his *present* happiness, or *immediate interest*, or add to his *apparent influence* and *respectability*, or *reputation and comfort;* a character which is principally governed by a concern for his own ease, without really consulting the good of others, is one which is injurious to society, one on whom no dependence can be placed; one on whose principles no reliance may be had; one which is positively unamiable; from the contemplation of which the mind recoils with instinctive horror, and which should be avoided with the greatest diligence.

Very early in life, there is manifested a propensity to conceal the truth, or to fabricate a falsehood, in order to hide it: or to act with insincerity, as if to obtain credit for being guided by principles and motives which do not really actuate the mind; a mournful fact, which of itself would be quite sufficient to demonstrate the natural propensity to that which is evil; and it is the merest drivelling to attempt framing a distinction between the *corruption* of human nature, and the *predisposition* towards it; as if the predisposition, were not in itself an evidence of its corruption, the corruption of that which was originally good, and is, therefore, now changed from some perverting cause; but by *what cause* the Scriptures of truth alone can tell, while they unfold and explain the

history of that miserable fall by which man is very far gone from original "righteousness," and has become "the bond-slave of hell:" a state from which he can alone be rescued by the righteousness of another, even of the Saviour Christ, the Lamb without blemish, who gave himself a ransom for many.

This tendency to falsehood must be narrowly watched; it must not be passed over in silence, and forgotten as a thing of no consequence; for it is not only in every instance sinful, but it will lead to the habitual disregard of truth, and this to unnumbered forms of evil. So frequently does this vice cross the path of the Christian instructor, that it is necessary to be thoroughly acquainted with all its varieties; since it is not only the palpable falsehood which demands restraint, but a thousand other specious appearances, under which a deviation from truth is attempted to be cloaked. Probably the first acquaintance of infancy with falsehood, consists in the concealment of some fact or circumstance, in order to hide a conscious fault; and let it be recollected, that as this very generally originates in the *fear* of punishment, so parents should beware, lest by their austerity, they may serve to develop the germ of this evil principle, the growth of which might have been repressed by cultivating the confidence of their children, and by rejoicing to show mercy and forgiveness upon confession and contrition.

But this forms a very small part of the fruit of falsehood, the last stage of which, the unblushing

deviation from truth is only to be met with, in the hardened, and well practised victim of lying. The principle of falsehood meets the eye in every form of *insincerity;* in the wish to obtain credit for motives and feelings which are not really experienced; in the *disingenuous* permission of erroneous good construction placed upon any part of our conduct, which we are conscious of not deserving; in the skilful *evasion* of inquiry which would lead to the detection of that which we are anxious to conceal; in the employment of the *double entendre,* that double meaning which admits of our receiving unmerited applause, or of escaping under shelter of its veil of obscurity, from that which we would hesitate to acknowledge; it assails us in every attempt to deceive others into a better opinion of ourselves than is just, or to decoy them into a line of conduct which leads elsewhere than to the goal which we have speciously assigned; it forms an essential ingredient in every species of *temptation* which points the broadest road; in every effort of *intrigue;* in every design of accomplishing by an *under-plot,* that which we fear might be impracticable by open and legitimate means; in every effort of *dissimulation* by which we endeavour to conceal our real judgment and opinion, and indirectly to lead others to suppose that the bearing of our mind is very different from that which it really is, or that we are quite *undecided,* when our resolution has been firmly taken; and upon all occasions in which we deliberately prefer a *doubtful motive* to that which is

candid, upright, and undeniable; we inhale its tainted breath in every accent of *flattery*, and we greedily devour the factitious incense, which arises from this insinuating and sublimated, but most deadly poison; it meets us in every *breach of promise*, though it may never have been expressed, but only implied, as an honourable engagement; in every form of *hypocrisy*, by which we profess more than we really feel; in every want of coincidence between the expression of the lips, and the actions of the man, and the feelings of the heart; in every instance of the *absence of integrity*, and of simple, honest, undeviating principle; and lastly, in every form of designed *exaggeration;* we say of *designed* exaggeration, for the human mind is so astonishingly prone to enlarge and embellish circumstances and feelings in which it has figured, and has been interested, and yet so frequently without any intention to deceive, or even to deviate in any degree from strict truth, that we should hesitate to denounce *all* exaggeration as exhibiting a positive want of veracity. It would perhaps be difficult to assign a sufficient cause for this very frequent propensity. The fact of its existence is, however, sufficiently established; and that which may possibly have originated in the love of the marvellous, or in vanity, or in a desire of exciting attention to ourselves and our narratives or exploits; that which is called into action, only to afford the silly gratification of becoming an object of wonder to

others, leads, if indulged, to all the evils attendant upon falsehood, and to all the miseries which await him who maketh and uttereth *a lie*. The habit of exaggeration is then *sinful*, for there can be no deviation from the simple, unadorned majesty and purity of truth which is not so, and therefore its application, even to trifling occurrences should be discouraged; since it is in these very trifles, in these white lies, in these incorrect histories, in these colourings of expediency, in these negative acts of falsehood, that the insidious commencement of the greatest crimes may be traced. Man does not become an accomplished villain in a day; neither does he at once acquire the full development of impudent falsehood: hence it is not only the lie direct which requires parental attention, but every possible mode of swerving from the truth, in every measure, and in every form of insincerity; because these spring equally from the same source, and are followed by consequences similar in their nature, though differing in degree. Now it is the *principle* which is hateful to God, and every form in which that principle is reduced to action; "none calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity and speak lies; there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us; we wait for light, but behold obscurity; we look for judgment, but

there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter; yea, truth faileth; and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him, that there was no judgment." Isaiah lix. 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15.

" Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord :" Proverbs xii. 22. *he* has declared his hatred and abhorrence of this sin, by inflicting the punishment of sudden death, in a case, not of aggravated falsehood, but of dissimulation. Ananias sold the land for *so much;* doubtless true; but the mental reservation of having sold it for *so much more,* was esteemed a lie in the sight of infinite purity, and *as such* was punished. Every similar case therefore must be observed by the Christian instructor; its heinousness must be exposed, and particularly its exciting the displeasure of God, whom the child has been taught to love and fear, must be insisted upon, together with the dreadful consequences of every such unrepented sin; since into the city of the new Jerusalem, of which the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, are the temple, and the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour unto it, " there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or *maketh a lie;*" (Revelations xxi. 27.) " for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whore-mongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever *loveth and maketh*

a lie :" (Revelations xxii. 15.) thus not only classing the liar with the murderer, but even making it the last link in the climax of iniquity, as the *grand source of all sin.*

Besides, falsehood leads to hatred and malevolence, towards those who have been injured by its calumnies; and eventually compasses retributive justice upon itself; "a lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin." Proverbs xxvi. 28. If then, from any selfish feeling, the parent should be disposed to pass by and overlook such offences as these; if she defer their correction to a more convenient season from excessive fondness to her child, then is she not only doing it an injury, but she is honouring her offspring, more than she honours God, and is obeying her own inclinations, rather than the expressed will of her heavenly Father. Surely, it is only necessary to consider this influence of the want of veracity over *the mind,* and its agency in detracting from the happiness and worth of the individual, both in the present and in a future world, in order that the necessity for its correction, may be felt; and that the torrent of iniquity may be stemmed by the barrier of principle, and that its course may be diverted into the newly formed channel of simplicity and sincerity, by inducing a habit of truth and candour, which are of the greatest importance, and necessary in their practical influence, to form a just and upright man; since in the lat-

ter term, is comprehended a constant desire to regulate the conduct by the Word of God, and in obedience to his will.

What then are that sincerity and truth, which are ingredients in the formation of the upright character, and what are the peculiar advantages attendant upon the steps of a good man? Sincerity implies a singleness of design, a unity of motive, a genuineness of principle, and an uprightness of action, which are not to be appalled by difficulties, or concealed by ridicule, or cajoled by flattery, or perverted by deceit, or distorted by passion, or betrayed by circumstance; it supposes a state which is opposed to all double-mindedness and dissimulation, in which the language of the lips, and the emotions of the heart are in constant unison, while they are as uniformly averse from every species of intrigue; a state which is inimical to all malice and wickedness, and in which there exists or should exist, a purity of motive without alloy, that is a sufficient guarantee, for that walking in the fear of the Lord, which can alone preserve the heart right with God; and without which sincerity will crumble away before the gust of passion, or the storm of interest, or the tempest of vice.

Sincerity is not however to be mistaken for bluntness of manner, or a still more doubtful principle of affectedly doing justice to others. Genuine sincerity always seeks to spare the feelings of its object, and to avoid wounding where it cannot heal. There are those who pride them-

selves upon being sincere, when they are merely indulging an offensiveness of manner, and an asperity of character, which do not form component parts of this virtue, and which are alien from the gifts of charity; and there are others, who under the same mask, gratify wounded pride, or anger, or revenge, and fancy that the real motive is concealed from others, as much as it is perhaps hidden to themselves. But genuine sincerity must be characterized by *truth of feeling*, as well as by adherence to principle; it is mild, and forgiving, and extenuating to offenders, while it is uncompromising to the offence; it remembers that *we* may be tempted, and that we daily and hourly need the intervention of our great advocate; aye, more, it begins at home, and if sincere to itself, it must be mild and tender hearted towards others; and if just to its own motives and feelings, it will be careful not to make this virtue a mask for inflicting punishment upon its neighbour; and will most carefully avoid all that which will bear the stamp of harshness of manner if not of cruelty of design.

Again, *truth* is opposed to falsehood and deceit in *every form*, even to that in which positive facts and just conclusions, are so stated to others, as to produce in them, an impression differing from the simplicity of their real nature; it is opposed to concealment, or evasion, and every species of prevarication; it consists in candour, honesty, and ingenuousness; it avoids the embellishment of what is true, for truth is lovely enough in its

own nature, and requires not the aid of ornament, which is generally the evidence of its having fallen from its high standard of integrity; it implies fidelity and punctuality in the performance of promises, these being estimated not by *our own words* at the moment of giving the pledge; nor by the manner in which they were understood by the *party receiving it;* nor by our secret intention; nor by any perverted construction we may choose to place upon our expressions; but by their plain and obvious unsophisticated *meaning*, when deprived of the perverting influence of prejudice, or passion, or fraudulent intention; and further, truth implies reality, and stands opposed to every species of hypocrisy and dissimulation, to the arguments of the sophist, to the subterfuges of the detected, to the labyrinths of expediency, to the endless windings of a crooked policy, to the finesse of intrigue: it stands alone in its unadorned majesty, for "the lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment." Proverbs xii. 19. Of so great, such paramount importance is the maintenance of truth, that it is to be preserved inviolate at the sacrifice of present interest; and it is a possession of such unspeakable value, that it is not to be parted with from any consideration of present or contingent advantage; "buy the truth and sell it not." Proverbs xxiii. 23. Such then are the characteristics of that sincerity, which enters into the composition of the upright character.

And if such be its trials and difficulties, such the sacrifices it demands, such the strenuous exertions it requires, what are its peculiar advantages? It will ensure, in the first place, the confidence and respect of our fellow men; however they may be disposed to deride it as particular and sanctimonious, and as being righteous over much; it will always carry with it a weight of character, which will ultimately secure a large portion of esteem, and will compel the homage of respect from those who dislike the upright, because *their strictness* is a tacit censure upon the laxity of the careless: "unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness:" (Psalm cxii. 4.) not only the extorted confidence of compeers, dimly shining through the darkness of this world of prejudice and error, but the far brighter ray of immortality, which dispels the gloom of present obloquy, and converts the night of neglect into the clearer day of heavenly peace.

But we go farther: the sacrifices of the upright are made in the sight of a just and holy God, "for his countenance doth behold the upright;" (Psalm xi. 7.) and "the way of the just is uprightness: thou most upright dost *weigh* the paths of the just;" (Isaiah xxvi. 7.) he estimates the feeblest effort if sincere, and though the world may hesitate approbation, *he* confers the light of his countenance upon the path, however obscure, however difficult. Moreover *he* will support the weak, and give strength to the feeble, by the comforts of his Spirit, and by the agency of their

own exertions in his cause; for the way of the Lord "is strength to the upright;" (Proverbs x. 29.) God will defend them from the aspersions of those who seek to injure them; for "*he* is a buckler to them that walk uprightly:" (Proverbs ii. 7.) *he* will reward them with abundant blessings, for *he who is truth*, who is a sun and shield, has promised that *he* will give grace and glory; and that "*no* good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm lxxxiv. 11. "The upright in their way are *his* delight;" (Proverbs xi. 20.) *he* will afford them support through life, strengthen them in difficulty, sustain and cheer them in sorrow, and carry them in peace through the last trial: for while the great power of the wicked is but for a moment; while his influence has passed away, and lo! he is not; and while, when he has yielded to the stroke of death, his hopes and his joys are gone for ever; "yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace;" (Psalm xxxvii. 37.) peace in death, and happiness beyond the grave; for surely, "the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence." Psalm cxl. 13. And as if all these contingent advantages were not enough, from Him, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not the weaknesses and frailties of his creatures, a large accession of present comfort has been provided for them; for by it, they are preserved

from temptation, from sinful compliances, from unjust thoughts of the government of the Most High,—for the "highway of the upright is to depart from evil; he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul:" (Proverbs xvi. 17.) their principles will be a safeguard in the hour of trial; a beacon to direct them in difficulties; and a constant friend to afford the right arm of support through the snares which environ them; for the "integrity of the upright shall guide them:" (Proverbs iii.) "yea, the righteousness of the upright shall deliver them;" (Proverbs xi. 6.) and lastly, they shall be surrounded with temporal blessings, as far as shall be needful, and good for them, since while "the house of the wicked shall be overthrown, the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish." Proverbs xiv. 11. And now, the good and evil being placed before them, surely parents will be inexcusable, if they do not cultivate the one, and repress the other, with their utmost assiduity.

Section II. *On Vanity—on Modesty.*

a. Vanity.

Vanity is one of the earliest principles which we see developed in the human breast; it dawns in the first ray of intellect; it clings to the indi-

vidual through life; and it sheds its evening beams on the dim twilight of age: it is perhaps particularly active in childhood and youth, less cognizable in maturity, and again more readily distinguishable in decrepitude. It is not to be confounded with pride, than which it is generally more factitious. Pride rests its claim on the actual possession of some good or great quality; vanity assumes the pre-eminence of some paltry distinction. Pride involves in its influence the desire of excelling: vanity that only of being noticed. Pride seeks for enjoyment in its own bosom: vanity is entirely depending for its gratifications on the incense of others. Pride is wounded by receiving approbation, which it is conscious of not meriting: vanity seeks for admiration, and is careless of desert. Pride is frequently based on a certain degree of respect for ourselves, and for our standing in society: vanity is always engaged upon some little attribute, some supposed distinction not worth possessing, and which we would almost blush to acknowledge as the object of pursuit to a rational and intellectual being. Pride may be directed by a principle of honour, to which vanity acknowledges no allegiance. Pride serves to raise the character, while vanity contracts its powers, and fixes it upon some low and mean standard. Vanity then is the pride of the ignorant and the feeble-minded, the attribute of little minds. But in proportion as ignorance and narrow-mindedness are more commonly to be found than knowledge and en-

larged views; in proportion as little minds prevail in number over those which have been expanded and extended by study and reflection, and above all, by christian motive; so is vanity more extensively operative than pride. A similar reason will explain its greater prevalence over the young and the old than upon the middle-aged: it reigns and revels most in the periods of development and decay, *before* the mental powers have been thoroughly expanded, and *when* they have begun to wither, and are advancing towards their period of decadence. Neither need we go farther for an explanation of the phenomenon, why vanity is supposed to be more generally operative upon *females:* it is not that they do not possess an equal degree of mental vigour, but that never having been called into action, it is not exhibited; it is as if it were not, and had no existence: besides that they possess more of exterior decoration about them, which they are early taught to be fond of, while their whole system of education fixes their attention, rather on accomplishments, than on solid possessions, and teaches them to set a value on that which will give *effect*, rather than on that which will produce solid and lasting esteem.

Vanity is exhibited even in savage life, in the decoration of the person, in a fondness for display, and in a relish for gaudy ornament: and it is perhaps equally prevalent, in a state of refined society, advancing towards too great a degree of luxury: only that here, it is more carefully con-

cealed, more perfected by art, than in the simplicity of the uninstructed.

Vanity rests upon the surface of thought: the veriest emptinesses afford the means of its nutrition; it will live upon air,—aye more, it will exist without it: for when deprived of the applause of others, it will retire within itself, and feed upon its own resources, and be vain even of suffering injustice from the want of a due appreciation of the little and contemptible peculiarities, which have afforded the pubulum for its existence. Numerous almost beyond calculation are the avenues by which it gains access to the heart. One individual is vain of personal beauty; another of rank; a third of ancestry, and of the multiplied quarterings upon the family escutcheon; and another of his country: one is vain of his wealth, his dress, his equipage, and every absurd trifle in the appointment of his domestic arrangements: another is vain of the vanity of his immediate predecessors, and thus inherits it as an heir-loom to be handed down to his posterity. But this evil principle will sometimes assume a still lower standard: one man will become vain in the proficiency of his imitation of those below him; he will be vain of identifying himself with the lowest vulgarities of the coachman and the groom; he will degrade himself to become acquainted with the arcana of pugilism, with the levelling society of the cock-pit,—nay, even with the art and mystery of cock-feeding; and will be vain of these most *manly*, most *gentlemanlike*, most *rational*,

most intellectual, most noble, most moral pursuits, most admirably suited to the wants and desires of an immortal soul; most excellently calculated to fulfil the great end of his existence here, to promote his own worth, and the well-being of others; so degrading is folly, so base the attempt to reduce man to a mere automaton of vulgar slang; the pure offspring, of the purest association, with the lowest scoundrels of the turf, the cock-pit, and the ring!

But vanity will stoop a grade lower, and there are some who will be vain of *their vices;* who will glory in the success of their intrigues, to smite the innocent, or dupe the unwary: there are those who will be vain of their mighty strength to drink wine; of their disregard of every social and religious institution; of their contempt of laws human and divine; of their disbelief in the Scriptures of truth; of their escape from the thraldom of priestcraft, that is, from the sanction of reason; the dictates of judgment; the results of reflection; the monitions of conscience; the strivings of the Spirit of the Most High God, with mortal man on the brink of the grave, and with the gulf of eternity before him.

Vanity will generally be found ostentatiously displayed; for individuals are commonly vain of its possession, and anxious to proclaim it to their neighbours; but it is sometimes concealed, especially when it has been unsuccessful in attracting attention and applause; and when this is the case, it produces a very marked and deleterious

agency ugon the peace of the individual who consumes in secret the humiliation to which he is subjected; who writhes under the affronts he is called to suffer, and yet does not acknowledge by a word or a sign that he feels at all; and who endures all the consequent punishment of disturbed peace and irritated mind, and yet dares not for a moment allow that he is unhappy or unsuccessful. And on the contrary, the vanity which is fed by the incense of adulation, and which grows and thrives upon the attention and flattery of others, conducts its possessor to the intoxication of success; drowns him in the insensibility of the giddy height to which it has attained, and leaves its victim to the wretched insecurity of self-dependence, or suddenly plunges him into the gloomy abandonment of friends and patrons, the neglect of acquaintance, and the contempt of the world at large. Yet in either case, during the unclouded hours of self-gratulation, or in the obscurity of desertion and self-reproach, the principle of vanity remains unextinguished, and inextinguishable; it survives the wreck of fortune, the loss of opportunity, and even the gratification of desire; and is still found floating on the surface of life, even when its slender thread is well nigh snapped asunder by the invisible, intangible, inappreciable zephyr of time!

Such is vanity! a vice for which the present age of the world is perhaps peculiarly remarkable; and yet what does it possess to render it desir-

able? It is fixed upon objects which are unprofitable, and without real enjoyment; its hopes and its confidence are vain and empty; for it will deceive and disappoint its votary at the last, at that awful crisis when he will most stand in need of consolation and support; at that great day, when the thoughts of the heart shall be made manifest, and the most secret vices shall be exposed. "Let not him that is deceived, trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his recompense." Job xv. 31. It is indeed true that "childhood and youth are vanity;" yet know thou, O young man, that if thou "walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the light of thine eyes, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Ecclesiastes ix. 10. All present objects, all temporary pursuits, even the very best of them, the desire after, and the acquisition of literary stores, are absolutely vain, and insufficient to produce satisfaction, or to procure lasting happiness. "Vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt;" man that is weak, ignorant, helpless, blind, the creature of a day, existing now in the flower of beauty, and gone before to-morrow's sun shall have dawned upon his closing moments; and what has he to be vain of, even in the highest application of his intellectual powers? that foolish creature, who since the fall of his first parent is void of all true wisdom, and solid knowledge; whose attention is caught by the vanity of his compatriot's applause; whose perception of good is well nigh extinguished by

the power and the love of evil; whose memory faithfully *retains* all the homage of success, and as faithlessly *forgets* all the toils by which it has been obtained, the sacrifices and mortifications which it has endured, and the breach of the laws of God which it has effected; whose reason is carried away before the attractions of some silly vanity, if not before the influence of some vicious propensity; whose reflection is haunted by the constant, restless anxiety for the past, and fear of the future; whose conscience if informed is uneasy, and if unenlightened is useless, or whose admonitions have been stifled by the constant recurrence of the empty impertinences of this world's attraction; and whose every intellectual power is depraved, debased, or rendered feeble and ineffective. And such is *vain man!* man, who in this very subjection to vanity has betrayed the weakness and incapacity of that fond boast of his reason, the feebleness and perversity of his judgment.

And if this be vanity, it is a vice to be repressed in christian education: yet if it cannot be destroyed—if its germ will still occupy the will, and pervert the imagination, and stimulate the faculty of imitation, let it be employed upon some worthy object; not upon the infatuation of some senseless pursuit; not upon the affectation of some disgraceful or degraded character; not upon the imitation of some impertinent singularity, or the copying some contemptible model, but as a stimulus to exertion and success; as a

barrier to the idleness and carelessness which too surely creep upon man, unless he be goaded into activity and energy of desire; as a stimulus to the pursuit of knowledge, and literary acquirement, and as an adjuvant to great and noble enterprise! and even then, though if unextinguished, and it must be employed, it had better be *thus* engaged; yet it will require the greatest caution: for what is evil will ever remain so, and will have a tendency to pervert, and to destroy the good.

b. Modesty.

True modesty consists in a prompt and delicate feeling of *propriety*, accompanied with that degree of commanding self-possession, which together, form the protecting ægis of the feeble from the impertinence of the unprincipled. It is the result of that susceptibility which induces its possessor to seek shelter from the rude gaze of others. It is partly automatic in its influence, and instinctively shrinks from the contact of evil; but it is more particularly dependent upon principle, and does not fail to bear its testimony against *that approach* towards vice, which can scarcely be suffered without contamination. So powerful and extensive are its associations, so majestic the true simplicity of its presence, that the voice of licentiousness is awed into silence; the breath of profligacy does not invade its asylum; and the career of the vicious, who mock at the laws of God, and are not restrained by the whisper of conscience,

is arrested by the power of virtue, by that transparent veil which conceals not a lineament of beauty, but effectually preserves it from the hostile approach of those noxious insects by which this world's atmosphere is infested.

Modesty does not consist in the suspicion of evil, in that irritability of morbid feeling, which is ever upon the watch after the possibility of offence; in that silly susceptibility which fancies the approach of injury, where no injury is intended: conscious of its own purity of feeling, it suspects not the want of a similar principle in others; aware of its self-possession, it is not continually making a manifesto, of its quickness of resentment; alive to the first deviation from *propriety*, and certain that its strength consists in the avoidance of temptation, it does not yet seek occasions for offence, nor find it necessary to be frequently exhibiting that ultra-susceptibility which is the inheritance of weak minds, or of those whose real feelings of modesty and propriety, have been perverted by an acquaintance with forms of vice, which should never have sullied the mind of virgin purity. This is a confession of weakness; it is precisely opposed to the confidence of rectitude; it is alien from the modesty of the accomplished female, who hears even the double entendre of vice without suspecting evil, because she is conscious of her own dignity, and is really unacquainted with the pernicious meaning of profligate inuendo, and knows full well, that her innocence is a protection, even to the purity of her mind; while it too frequently

arises from that contamination of thought and feeling, which has been produced by a precocious knowledge of the wickedness of the licentious, occasioning a loss of that mental innocence which it vainly fancies may be supplied, or at least concealed by a display of irritability, which the good and the wise will ever consider as morbid feeling, and arising from some morbific cause. Genuine modesty will teach as matters of scientific research, or inquiry, *objects* which cannot be approached by this excessive feeling, without associating with them ideas which should never possess an acknowledged existence, and which are an offence to innocence. "To the pure all things are pure;" these can join in conversation without *fear* of danger; while the irritable are always on the *qui vive* for that which is wrong, as if conscious of their weakness, or suspicious of their principles. It is principled *propriety*, and not feeling, which forms the essence of true modesty, and affords that safeguard from vice, which renders it inaccessible. The veil of modesty may be blown aside by the flutter of silly agitation, but it will only be drawn closer by the quiet self-possession of virtue.

It is of great consequence, in the education of this virtue, to preserve the mind free from a *knowledge* of the details of vice, to develop it upon the basis of principle, to guard its application, to foster the quiet tact of propriety, and encourage that easy self-confidence, which is not to be shaken by any fancied collision with impurity; a collision which too generally exists only in that

revulsion of feeling, which is excited in a bosom where conflicting elements are at war, and which almost surely leaves a speck, a spot, a wrinkle of pollution behind.

The principle of modesty operates, much more extensively than in the narrow application, we have just contemplated. In the first place, it is opposed to pride and vanity; for although it has been sometimes employed as an artificial veil for the concealment of self-love, yet the genuine virtue supposes that diffidence which is incompatible with being proud of our mental standing, or even contented with present attainments. As pride arises from ignorance, and from the want of an acquaintance with the nature and extent of this destitution of knowledge; so modesty originates in a conscious sense of that very ignorance, and of our general unworthiness and sinfulness, our impotence and misery, the circumscribed nature of our talents and faculties, our proneness to error, the entire loss of our primitive righteousness, and the great difficulty we feel in choosing the good, and eschewing evil, nay more, in forming our judgment only of *what is good and evil.* "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter v, 5. Christ himself took upon him the form of a servant, in order to instruct us to be meek and lowly: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest for your soul; for my yoke is easy, and my burden light." Matthew xi. 29, 30. And this too was pronounced by *him*

who cannot err, and who has previously declared that although "foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, yet the son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Genuine modesty perfectly consists with a proper estimate of ourselves, our powers and capacities; for this will lead to a consciousness of the weakness of our own understanding, and teaches us to consider seriously and deliberately, and even to hesitate before we act or believe; and stops all curious inquiries into things unsearchable. Modesty and diffidence are indeed becoming to a being, whose capacities are at once so *limited,* that he cannot comprehend the rationale of the simplest natural phenomena, yet so *boundless* as to be employed in loving and praising God throughout the ages of eternity. And if a being of such high destiny be so chained down to a little narrow sphere of knowledge, by the material vehicle through which the operations of mind are conducted, shall he not be modest in his pretensions; shall he not be humble in his views? What is man that *thou* art mindful of him, or the son of man that *thou* visitest him? When man deviates from this appropriate modesty, and seeks to dive into researches which are hidden from his view, he becomes an object of *pity,* from the vain expenditure of his time and talents; when he attempts to explain mysteries which are beyond the reach of his understanding he betrays his folly and wickedness; but when he ventures to prescribe laws to omniscience he becomes impious and profane.

Modesty does not claim for itself the meed of superiority; though commonly the attribute of exalted minds, it readily believes, and easily admits others to be superior; it is conscious of its ignorance and insufficiency; and aware of the many sources of fallacy to human judgment, it is slow in forming its opinions, and cautious and reserved in declaring them, till by repeated trials of reason and experience, it has tested their validity in every possible way; and even then, it is cautious in pronouncing *positively* on a subject, on which it is impossible to be placed in possession of all the circumstances which might influence opinion.

So amiable is this virtue, so prepossessing in its influence, that it is often assumed as a cloak for intolerable pride! There is a lowliness, and humility, and self-abasement, very far distant from the hesitation of the diffident, and which consists rather in *profession* than in *act*. The individual seeks for information, solicits opinion, professes distrust in his own judgment, not with the view of receiving guidance and conviction, but to obtain materials upon which to institute a comparison favourable to his own views; to try the sentiments of others by his own prejudices; and thus minister to the intolerance of his own narrow assumptions.

Again, there is a species of ultra-modesty, which professes the complete abandonment of its opinions as utterly worthless and unprofitable! Such individuals will not think a thought, or put forth an idea, or venture a sentiment, much less

form a judgment of their own: they will adopt the views of others; they will embrace the opinions of the many; they will leave the labour of thought, and yield their understandings to take any mould or impression of persons, and circumstances, and opinions, and care very little as to the consequences. This is idleness, or indifference, or time-serving, but it is not modesty! There are others, who with all these professions, will yet be imbued with strong prejudices; they will be very humble, so long as no favourite dogma, the veriest trifle of the first stratum of opinion shall be impugned; but touch them on this single point, and their humility will be disenchanted, and will stand forward in its genuine colours of bigotry, and selfishness, and sectarian narrow-mindedness.

Modesty must be ingenuous and sincere, or it is worthless; it will rejoice to obtain instruction, even from a child; and with the conviction of its imperfections, it will be the grand object of pursuit, to accumulate the truest wisdom,—the wisdom that is from above. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children," the declaration of our Lord himself, will form the basis of its exertions; it will desire to be taught of God; it will feel its ignorance, and will seek for the instruction of wisdom; it will confess its helplessness, and will solicit strength from Him who can impart it; it will acknowledge its feebleness and need of support, its proneness to error, and the necessity for constant preservation; its

present paucity of attainment, and need of growth and advancement to maturity; and it will implore the aid of the Spirit of grace, through whose presence and assistance it can alone *stand*, much less advance in the way of truth, which leadeth unto life.

Modesty is to be distinguished from reserve, or retirement of character: it does not indeed court observation, or make an ostentatious display of its feelings; but it does not shrink from difficulty; it is not appalled by trial; it is not ashamed of bearing its firm testimony in favour of truth; it disclaims the passive inertness of him who liveth for himself; it does not hesitate on the verge of duty, and withdraw from its performance; it does not draw around it the shades of inaction, or blink its duties, as a rational being in society, and as a Christian; as a citizen of the world, and as a denizen of that brighter, better world, to which it is modestly hoping, striving not as uncertainly, contending not as one that beateth the air, but "keeping under the body, and bringing it into subjection," that it may so run as to obtain not a corruptible, but an incorruptible crown.

Thus while reserve diminishes the attraction, and retirement the usefulness of a character; true modesty invests it with influence; it gives weight to actions, and credit to words; it creates a prejudice favourable to the individual possessor, from the general observation of mankind, that the

unpretending, diffident, but simple and principled character, is more to be relied upon, than the boastful, empty, and careless arrogant professor, who fails in the hour of greatest need; and perhaps also from the excitement of the imagination, occasioned by the character being viewed through a veil, which prevents its several points from standing out to naked observation, and therefore gives room for investing it with a greater degree of power and influence than it really deserves.

But again, the possession of this virtue preserves the individual from the blast of envy, which superciliously overlooks the modest as too lowly and insignificant for its envenomed shaft; and by allaying the selfishness of temper, and controuling the pride of intellect, and teaching the weight of attention due to the views and opinions of contemporaries, and inculcating a distrust of our own judgment, and a high estimation of that of others; and teaching us not to make a display of our feelings, which cannot possibly be generally interesting; and instructing us to be kind towards all men, and lenient to their prejudices; and shewing us the value of the quiet self-possession of principle, it renders our intercourse with society, far more useful and agreeable.

And finally, modesty exerts no trifling power, in strengthening our good resolutions, and in restraining at the same time our evil inclinations; adding to the growth of virtue, and repressing the dominion of vice, extending the agency of good

principle, and diminishing the power of temptation; ensuring the conformity of the good man to his great pattern and exemplar, and placing a barrier to the downward road of the wicked.

Section III. *On Idleness.*

The man of business sighs for leisure; for that intermission of action, which is the fondly anticipated termination of fatigue; the daily labourer, exhausted under the fervid ray of a meridian sun, watches with anxiety its western journey, and hails with delight its lengthened ray as announcing the cessation of his toil; and on the last day of the week, looks forward with solid pleasure to his sabbath of rest; the man who has lived much in the world, and has grown tired of its pleasures, and has been disgusted with its selfishness, who is wearied with the incessant demands upon his attention and exertion, who has been worn by the injustice and ingratitude of mankind, disappointed by the hypocrisy of friends, and worried by the thousand occasions, on which *his* interests and feelings have been sacrificed for any trifling whim, or caprice, or inadequate motive, by those to whom it was entrusted, earnestly longs to be enabled to exchange the present contentions and irritation of his mind, for that retreat from the world, in which all its duplicity and falsehood, all its low intrigues and petty in-

terests, all its flattering and fawning smiles, all its paltry acts of disingenuous concealment, all its disgraceful evasions of duty, all its bigotry and intolerance, all its frowns and sarcasms and ridicule, all its calumny and scandal, all its impatience, and ready wilful misconstruction of action and motive, all its restless ambition and its sordid avarice, all its intolerable pride, all its envy and jealousy, all its hatred and resentment, all its contempt and scorn, all its splendid fooleries, and its lightly esteemed wisdom, all its discountenanced virtues, and its fostered vices, all its wild amusements and dissipation, all its narrow doctrines, its changing opinions, and its delusive maxims; *all* shall be excluded from his notice, or if not entirely shut out from his senses, shall be mellowed by distance, and will be seen and heard through such a medium as shall enable him to contemplate with interest, yet to review without passion. In all these instances, leisure is desired and desirable; but here also there must *not* be idleness, or there will not be happiness; there must be action, and motive, or there will be misery. Thus the man of business, when he flies from the toils of his counting-house, must have pursuit, or he will sigh for his books and his papers; the Sunday of the labourer will be a weariness to him, the hardest labour of the week, unless it may bring with it, its appropriate employment; and his yawning and exhausted system will betray the suffering it has undergone from the absence of his customary toil, and from

the want of an adequate substitute, as pleasure and duty combined, which will bear its impress upon the mind, during the week, and create a goût for its periodically returning pleasures. The man who retires from the world will soon grow weary of his solitude, unless his hours be enlivened by literary or benevolent, or some inferior pursuit; he will find that unparticipated pleasure is but half enjoyed; and he will feel, that in the monotony of his own reflections, he possesses a far greater evil, a far worse oppression, and more intolerable burden than would be all the turmoils of the world.

It has been said that nature abhors a vacuum; she acknowledges not an empty space; all is created for use, to do, or to suffer, to employ, or to be employed. And so does intellect abhor the absence of exertion; that vacuity of thought, and feeling, and action, which is its grand aversion; it knows not of one useless attribute; every manifestation has its object, every object its peculiar utility, and each the specific labour necessary to obtain it, the labour of desire, the stimulus of hope, the reward of enjoyment; since that which is obtained with difficulty is valued, while that which is procured without effort is very little esteemed. A state of indolence is then a morbid state, a condition of disease, as if the heart could cease to act from mere fatigue, without the greatest danger; there may be lessened, there may be varied action: there may be considerable exertion *now*, and a slighter effort presently; a

comparative degree of quiescence, and then again succeeded by a mighty striving after some important good; but there must be *action*, or there will be *misery;* and there must be *good action*, or there will be *vice!* How comes it then, that we trace so much indolence, such a strange propensity to inertness in the world? How is it that we see the evil spirit of idleness, subjugating the industrious principle, and bearing down before it every motive to exertion, as in the luxurious and feeble inhabitant of an Indian or African soil, or in the hardy, but scarcely less indolent Aborigines of the North American continent? A similar cause will be found operative upon both, viz. the dearth of sufficient *motive* to exertion, the absence of social stimulus, the want of education, the paucity of intellectual acquirement, and the neglect of moral and religious sanction. Both are only anxious to supply the immediate necessities of to-day, and are thoughtless of to-morrow; while their wants are almost entirely limited to the cravings of appetite; in one case, the fertile soil brings forth in such abundance, that a supply for these necessities is easily obtained; and in the other, the successful hunter feasts to-day, and retires to his natural indolence till again roused by the stimulus of hunger; *both* esteem themselves too free to labour, and will not *continue their exertions*, whatever may be the prize set before them; *both* feel that to eat and sleep form the great aim of existence; they will accomplish the former, till they

have induced the latter; and they will enjoy this state, until exertion becomes indispensable. *Both* also want the stimulus of society; their females are in a state of the lowest degradation, not their companions, but their slaves—not their friends for whose support and protection, every muscle and nerve should be energized to exertion, and every sacrifice should be made, but who become rather the objects of their brutalities, the butt of their haughty scorn, the ministers to their wants, the sufferers from their indolence. The ties of kindred have very little influence upon them; and oftentimes the aged, aye, even the aged parent when too feeble for exertion, or incapable of obtaining support by hunting, shall be left to perish from want, or shall fall by the ruthless hand of the indolent parricide. In *both cases* too, there is a want of intellectual acquirement; the manifestations of mind are few and feeble; and the light of that noble principle is almost entirely quenched in the darkness of ignorance, in that night of reason which *education*, and *Christian education* can alone dispel by the brightening beams of the day-star of righteousness: *in both cases*, there is more; there is not only the absence of intellectual acquisition, but the entire want of any desire to obtain it, and a preference of the state of quiescence; appetite, and the cravings of want can alone stimulate to exertion; and alas! here there is so complete an intellectual torpor and destitution, that there is no appetite for literary or moral food; no desire

for information. To all this may be superadded the want of Christian motive and principle, that which teaches the devotion of every talent and faculty to the glory of God; that which teaches man to aspire after conformity to his Maker; that which shews him his lost condition, and the necessity for striving to regain that state in which it was said of him, that he was "*very good;*" that which indicates the way of return to holiness and happiness, and sets before him the necessity for exertion; that which teaches, that his safety consists in energy and watchfulness; that which inculcates activity in business, solicitude for families, and the exercise of benevolence to mankind. *Religion* will transform even the savage, from the idle to the industrious, or it will do nothing for him; it will teach him to "do good and to distribute," to turn not away his face from the poor, to cherish the sick, prolong the life of the aged, to be merciful after his power, and even, if he have little, to do his diligence to give gladly of that little. And if such be a genuine picture of indolence, and such the tendency of uneducated man towards its indulgence, how important is it, that this natural bias should be counteracted, and supplanted by the spirit of exertion.

The power of indolence has a disposition to increase, and a degree of quietude which would satisfy it to-day, would be in a short time absolutely fatiguing exertion: a principle of augmentation, which the parent will do well to keep in

view, in order that she may avoid, as far as possible, those unfortunate days termed "holydays;" days generally the most wearisome to infancy, the most productive of little vexations and sorrows, and ever followed by a loss of the energy of industry. There must be *action*, or there cannot be peace: let then the holyday be a day of *change of active duty*, of more interesting employment and pursuit, but let it still be a *day of action*.

The spirit of idleness is encouraged, particularly in eastern countries, by the doctrine of fatalism; a doctrine upon which industry cannot be engrafted; exertion withers, and fruitfulness is impossible. There are also those who have perverted the doctrine of Providence, and the promises of the Most High to his faithful followers, so as to make them careless of the future. But this is a perversion of the truth; and a reliance upon Providence is feeble and groundless, if it be employed as a motive to indolence; or as an excuse for the want of perseverance; or as a reason for the diminution of exertion; for however delightful it may be to repose with confidence upon the unchanging goodness of Jehovah, it will be of no avail beyond the mere sensitive enjoyment, to him who does not strive and contend for the goods of nature, of intellect, and of grace, *as if* they might be procured by his own utmost exertions; for "if any would not work, neither should he eat;" (2 Thessalonians iii. 10;) the boons of Providence are not designed for the

idle, and the ban of starvation is placed upon him.

Idleness leads to a criminal waste of time; of that invaluable talent, which we shall never duly estimate; but of which we shall regret every mispent hour, as we approach the close of life; and for one single moment of which we would hereafter give worlds of pleasurable enjoyment, should we then occupy the place of torment of the luxurious rich man. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."

Idleness is the fatal atmosphere in which intellect cannot breathe; it withers, becomes feeble, sinks and dies; the immortal soul is imprisoned by the merest wants of the animal; it grasps after futurity, and it is attempted to be satisfied with the more than emptiness of sensual desire, the entire exhaustion of that principle which should support its vitality, and the consequent overpowering weight of the medium which surrounds it. "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone-wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction." Proverbs xxiv. 30, 31, 32. So true is it, that by indolence the image of the Most High is exhibited in man, as overgrown

with vices and follies, and his understanding is crumbled away from the want of employment.

But again, idleness is opposed to happiness and success; for as pursuit is the great secret of peace, and the only road to acquisition and consideration is by industry; and the best means of obtaining influence is by persevering energy of character; and the only mode of fulfilling the great design of living, is by doing the will of God: so, "the idle soul shall suffer hunger;" and "he becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand;" while "the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" and "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Proverbs xix. 15, x. 4, xiii. 4.

The encouragement of this vice leads to dependence upon others, and renders man a slave to his passions, and the needy vassal of those who will contribute to their indulgence. A miserable penalty, the due meed of those who will deliberately prefer the most degraded villeinage; the meat and drink of worse than feudal power, to the freedom of conscious usefulness, to the activity of intellect, to the subjugation of desire, to the expansion of the heart, the enlargement of the feelings, the independence of industry, the conscious majesty of mind. "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule; but the slothful shall be under tribute." Proverbs xii. 24.

Indolence concentrates the views of the individual upon himself; he is too feeble, and too contracted to supply his own wants; and of course, has no heart to think of the necessities of

others; and thus is he left a monument of uselessness, and a misery to himself; for "the soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing." Proverbs xiii. 4.

Again, idleness leads to the indulgence of unreal fears, and produces an attention to little inconveniences, which should only serve as a stimulus to surmount difficulty, and to pass over the lesser trials of life; aye, the veriest trifles are magnified into momentous obstacles; the web of the gossamer will serve to deflect the indolent from his course; and the chirping of the grasshopper will be enough to destroy his firmness of purpose, to dissipate his resolution, and leave him a prey to idle fears, and pusillanimous inaction. "The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing." "The slothful man saith, there is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets." Proverbs xx. 4, xxvi. 13.

The spirit of indolence leads to the indulgence of sleep; is an enemy to early rising; produces hebetude of the faculties; destroys the chance of improvement, and leaves the mind a waste, whose exclusive quality is, that it continually extends, and encroaches farther and farther upon the yet remaining resources of its border territory. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Proverbs xxiv. 33, 34. "Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and

thou shalt be satisfied with bread." Ibid. xx. 13. "As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed. The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth."

Lastly, indolence degrades the man in his own eyes, or it ministers to his conceit; for in the latter case, "the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason;" (Proverbs xxvi. 16;) while in the former, the curse and the consciousness of unprofitableness rest upon him, and the conviction of uselessness leads him to disesteem himself; vilifies the mind; conducts him to deceit, and leaves him to the absence of candour, and frankness, and rectitude of conduct. To all these evils, we have only to observe in conclusion, that every thing around us is constant action; not a pause is allowed; nothing stands still; nothing is happy without exertion; and surely with such lessons before their eyes, parents will studiously eradicate this destructive vice.

Section IV. *On Prudence.*

Prudence is the faculty of foreseeing by the aid of reason, of moral tact, or of enlightened conscience, what is or is not favourable to our personal safety, or future hopes; and it is predo-

minant in the individual according to the development of his intellectual capacities, his moral feelings, his spiritual desires; and in proportion as these are regulated and governed by principle, enlightened by the Spirit of God, and submitted to the law of God: "a prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished." Proverbs xxii. 3.

Prudence is not only a conservative virtue, which enables its possessor to avoid danger; but it is likewise that wisdom and discretion which endow him with the power of distinguishing what is the line of conduct to be adopted in circumstances of difficulty; whether of joy or sorrow, of hope or fear, of excitation or depression, according to the time, and place, and object in question, as well as according to the persons with whom we may stand connected, and *their* thoughts and feelings, together with their modes and habits of action; always yielding, where it is possible, things which are not important, disarming prejudice, conciliating feeling, yet remaining firm and unbending to the plain and positive requisitions of the holy law of God. It is *knowledge* which directs what is to be done, and what is to be avoided, and this forms the basis for action; but it is *prudence* which acquaints us how this knowledge is to be applied with the best effect, and instructs how to perform that which is before us duly and conveniently; how to choose a proper time for its accomplishment; and especially how to *abstain* from doing altogether, at an

unfortunate or unpropitious period. Much mischief often results from the display of zeal in a *good* cause, which is not subjugated and tempered by prudence. Thus, then, wisdom must form the ground-work of the prudent character: "be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." It is well known that the serpent was considered as emblematical of prudence, and of that wisdom which assumes its name and attributes, when it becomes an *active* faculty. This is that "understanding heart," the great object of the wise man's prayer, in order that he might "judge the people, and discern between good and evil." 1 Kings iii. 9. This is "that wisdom" which "excelleth folly as far as light excelleth darkness;" and of which it is said, that "the wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness." Ecclesiastes ii. 13, 14. The prudent man walketh in the light; his eyes are ever cast around him to discern the track upon which the rays of knowledge have shone; while thick darkness, the night of ignorance, the clouds of error, the mists of prejudice, the dim twilight of unassisted reason, the uncertain coruscations of wild enthusiasm, the storms of passion, and the alternating seasons of feeling, all serve still farther to bewilder the thoughtless wanderer who has left the path of wisdom, and who has forgotten to take oil with his lamp.

Prudence is not an innate faculty; witness the heedlessness of infancy; its proverbial want of

foresight; its quiet unconscious peace, in the midst of surrounding danger; its preference for the gratified wish of the moment to a future contingent good, however valuable; witness the constant evils to which it is exposed from carelessness, and the reiterated unfortunate trials which are necessary to teach wisdom, and enforce the value of prudence. It is seldom that a boon of any magnitude, as connected with this virtue, can be obtained, except by dearly bought experience; and parents should not therefore be anxious to preserve their children from the mischievous consequences of their heedlessness, since these are really the appointed means of leading them to think of wisdom, and to practise that foresight and care which are frequently not developed until irreparable injury may have resulted from their absence. "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." Proverbs viii. 12. The want of this faculty is destructive to life and comfort; not a day, and hardly an hour can be passed without its influence. Scarcely could we be preserved from the many calamities which threaten us on every side, but for the means of defence suggested by prudence. A thousand instances might be mentioned in which this virtue forms the appointed means of safety from imminent danger; and it is by the exercise of the faculty that man may be prompted to flee from the wrath to come; to escape from the dominion of sin, and be translated into the liberty

of the children of God. "O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end."

It would be impossible to enumerate the many occasions for the exercise of prudence in passing through life; a few only may be specified. Thus, for instance, the principle is exemplified by placing that restraint upon the tongue, which will preserve it from mischief. How frequently does it happen that an inadvertent or unguarded expression shall be perverted by prejudice, or distorted by passion, or coloured by feeling, or repeated with an unintentional shade of difference, or magnified by crafty design, or altered by malevolent purpose; and then so completely is it changed in its complexion as to be scarcely recognized; it is met by angry and injudicious feeling, and followed by recrimination and rejoinder, and then, "behold! how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Again, the confidence of a friend may be unwittingly betrayed, and what has been told us in the simplicity of perfect openness and sincerity, when retailed by others, and dressed up by interest, and exaggerated by private hopes and fears and designs, has so lost its original character, as to be often injurious to the first innocent promulgator, and to be productive of the most serious evil: "a tale-bearer separateth very friends."

Again, great caution is required in delivering an opinion upon conduct; and in ascribing motives where it is not possible that we can be

thoroughly acquainted with all the circumstances of individual situation; yet nothing is more common, than for man to judge of his fellow man in this way; to *imagine* motives for a particular group of actions, and then to detail them, as if they had actually existed, and this usually leads to passing judgment upon the individual according to the nature of these supposititious motives; and to all these cases prudence supplies an antidote; "O that ye would altogether hold your peace; and it should be for your wisdom." Job xiii. 8.

In circumstances of difficulty and in situations of trial and delicacy, when the pathway is obstructed by inclination, or is hedged in by the feelings of others, and when perseverance in rectitude is only to be obtained by strenuous exertions; and when large sacrifices of personal comfort and relative feeling are necessary; and when *firmness of purpose,* and the utmost softness and *conciliation* of manner are to be reconciled; then it is, that prudence will become a guide through the intricacies of the labyrinth, and will give strength to overcome its difficulties. "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise, more than the mighty men which are in the city: for there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not: also take no heed unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee." Ecclesiastes vii. 19—21.

Prudence is again called for in repressing emotion. In allowing the first burst of feeling to find *utterance in expression,* we give occasion for the

triumph of enemies, and for the blushes of those who love and esteem us with the firmest friendship. It is very seldom that the passions can be listened to with impunity, when they prompt to action, *even in our own breast;* but when we give them a tangible form, and embody them in words, and allow them a substantial existence, we show our own weakness, we betray our inconsistencies, and the many points of moral stain and imperfection which cleave to us ; especially when we are eager to take offence, quick in resenting a supposed slight, ready to exhibit the influence of wounded pride, revengeful, implacable, unforgiving ; *then* do we betray our feebleness, our need of prudence, for the " Discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." Proverbs xix. 11.

Again, prudence forms a shield from the attacks of our enemies ; disarms malevolence ; blunts the shaft of slander ; unravels the mysterious doublings of calumny; is the best protection against those who " hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;" enables us to repel false accusation by the mild consistency of uniform character ; preserves us from yielding to the temptation of the wicked ; gives an antidote to plausible error ; affords a warning against entering the neutral ground which environs the dark territory of those who forget God, and who are deprived of the light of his countenance ; teaches us to avoid the society of such as do evil, and " whose ways are crcoked ;" and enables us to pursue the good way, the narrow

path that leadeth unto life; so true is it that "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." Proverbs ii. 2.

To a certain extent, concealment is an attribute of prudence. To relate all we know will be to involve ourselves and others in misery, and oftentimes in ruin; but it will be the truest discretion to conceal that which may do much evil, though it may also do *some good*, and *á fortiori* that which *must* occasion much evil, and can only by possibility do a little good. It is often wise to conceal *our* knowledge of events, though we are certain that they *must* eventually transpire; it is better that they should be generally circulated by others, especially if our acquaintance with them may have arisen from confidential circumstances. It is far more desirable that events of a painful nature, that little blots of character, should be wrapped around with a veil of kindness, than be held up to the notice of the world, and pointed at by the finger of scorn, or that they should raise the curled lip of derision, "A prudent man covereth shame;" "a prudent man concealeth knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness." Proverbs xii. 16, 23. So extensive is the influence of this principle upon the social compact; so necessary is it to preserve the peace and good order of society, the comfort and reputation of ourselves; the esteem and respect, the benevolent feelings and friendship of others towards us.

Prudence is a deliberative faculty; its chief

support is knowledge, it holds counsel with truth; it weighs the past, the present, and the future; it estimates contingencies; it considers present advantage against rectitude of action and future good; it draws its maxims from experience; it listens to the wisdom of others, it avails itself of every means of information; it decides slowly, but it acts firmly; it is not hasty in its resolves, but it is inflexible in its pursuit of that which it judges to be right. "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I have understanding, I have strength." "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit." Proverbs viii. 14, xiv. 8. It is cautious in giving credence to human testimony, for it knows the liability to error, mistake, and even wilful misrepresentation; it is tardy in yielding its assent to truth, except upon conviction; it is doubtful even of the evidence afforded by its senses; and it requires a frequent arrival at the same conclusion, both by the methods of synthesis and analysis, and by different routes, before it can make up its mind to action; "the simple believeth every word; but the prudent man looketh well to his going." Proverbs xiv. 15.

The utmost prudence is required in giving as well as in receiving advice; *both* perhaps the most difficult situations of social life; for it is not easy to place ourselves in the exact circumstances of *him* whom we presume to advise; and the cool results of unimpassioned opinion, are not always the most correct; for the all-bountiful Creator

has given us feelings and passions to influence our conduct, *upon which* the understanding must sit in judgment; so that "wisdom is profitable to direct," (Ecclesiastes x. 10,) and without prudence, we shall but excite a painful recoil and collision, and defeat every purpose of good. Again, in receiving the advice of sincerity and friendship, though it may not be palatable, though it may be formed upon narrow views, and be influenced by prejudiced feelings, and conveyed in an injudicious manner, and may be calculated to irritate; and though it may have been based upon false data; yet should it be received with kindness and candour, and weighed with sincerity, and estimated with reflection, and allowed its due amount of influence, and ever be repaid by its meed of gratitude; for "only by pride cometh contention; but with the well advised is wisdom." Proverbs xiii. 10.

But the highest effort of prudence, is when it deliberates on eternity; when its views are no longer bounded by time; when it escapes from the snares and the fetters of mortality; when it is encircled by the radiance of its high original; when "*the light of the world*" becomes its guide; when it ceases to grope its darkling way, through the midnight gloom of this world's meridian splendour; when it refuses its dependence upon the fitful gleam of intellect, and trembles before the alternate cloud and sunshine of passion; when it sits at the helm of action, and becomes the pilot of the soul; when it keeps its stedfast and

uplifted eye upon its great Exemplar, and strenuously endeavours to follow his footsteps; when it is actively and perseveringly directed against every irregular movement; and when it assigns just limits to moral character and conduct, and acknowledges no definition of morality, which does not include *religion;* and knows of no principle under this imposing term, but the *religion of the Bible:* then it is, that "happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding;" (Proverbs iii. 13;) for "wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding; for a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee." Proverbs iv. 7, 9. "The wise in heart shall be called prudent." Proverbs xvi. 21. "And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of thy salvation; the fear of the Lord is his treasure." Isaiah xxxiii. 6.

This wisdom is humble: this prudence is diffident; it is precisely opposed to that vain-glorious spirit, which makes self its centre, which ceases to be a conservative principle, and which leads its votary to the brink of destruction. Prudence is the gift of God, and as such, possesses nothing in common with the conceited feeling, which prompts the thought, if not the words, "by the strength of *my* hand *I* have done it, and by *my* wisdom, for *I* am prudent." Isaiah x. 13. When the mind has arrived at this state, it has cast away fear, and has bidden adieu to all true wisdom and prudence. But what saith the Almighty

to this spirit? "Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory, he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; and it shall burn, and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; and shall consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them."

Once more, the exercise of prudence teaches us to avoid the follies and dissipations of the world around; it instructs us to be disconformed to its maxims, its habits, its customs, its sayings, its conduct, its society, its spirit; it teaches us not to yield, even in things which are really indifferent, but which *might* wear the appearance of evil; or which *might* at least endanger still farther compliances, till the grand marks of distinction between the Christian and the man of the world, were lost in one deplorable amalgamation. And since "folly is joy only to him who is destitute of wisdom;" and since "a man of understanding walketh uprightly;" (Proverbs xv. 21;) so shall we find that the way of happiness is the pathway of wisdom; and that *prudence* is characterized by *rectitude* of conduct; by observing the straight road of christian propriety; and never deviating from it for any sinister purpose. But while such is the plain duty of the christian pilgrim, it

equally becomes him not to suffer his good to be evil spoken of; he must be prudent towards those who think differently from himself; he must recollect, that he is living *in* the world, though he aims to *live above its spirit;* and he is not called upon to jostle and oppose every traveller whom he meets or overtakes on the high road; or to run a muck with those whose opinions and views are opposed to his own; above all, is he not qualified, or even permitted to quarrel with a "friend or brother," who may be pursuing the same objects, but by a somewhat different road; or at a greater or less rapid pace; or who may wear a different costume from his own; or whose dialect varies; whose feelings may be less excited; whose judgment may be less informed; whose views may be limited; whose opportunities have been less extensive, and who cannot take broad views of the land before him, but whose opinions are chained down to the immediate wants of the day, and to the sentiments of the few around him. Prudence forbids our interference with all these peculiarities. Our object in passing through the world, should not be the encouragement, or repression of its details, but the avoidance of its spirit; not the exhibition of a sectarian, but of a christian temper; not the indulgence of party feeling, or intolerant views, but of a catholic and universal charity; not a desire to chide or censure those who differ from us, but an earnest wish more and more closely to imitate the Saviour; not to betray a hostile feeling which

may be construed into churlish misanthropy against the usages of society, but rather to win over others to our more simple, more cheerful, more satisfying plans and pursuits. It is not seclusion from the world, which prudence requires, but separation from its follies and its vices, which constitute its madness, and evince its idolatry to him who is the god of this world. Then does it form the means by which the kindest designs of Providence may be carried into effect; thus may be accomplished, that which should be its grand object, the safety of ourselves, and the paramount good of others. These objects are compatible; but they will fail unless supported by wisdom.

Prudence is susceptible of cultivation; and it should be an object of christian education to develop its influence, and perfect its agency, by leading the young mind to an acquaintance with those objects, which are its great desire; by applying the maxims of wisdom to all the daily circumstances and events of life; and by shewing that it is only through the instrumentality of circumspection, that the most painful errors, as well as the most fatal dangers can be avoided. The habit of circumspection arises from the principle of prudence, and consists in looking forward, and in taking enlarged views of men and things; discovering difficulties and dangers; searching out and choosing the safest and the nearest path; and obtaining such an acquaintance with the country through which we are travelling, that we

may advance firmly, without fear, and without offence. Even animals are taught by instinct, the necessity for circumspection; and the principle is exhibited at every turn of nature's wide domain. What a reproach upon the heedlessness of man! that he, with all his superadded reason, should not be circumspect, but oftentimes destitute of common prudence; and how guilty must *he be*, if while the beasts which perish are characterized by this principle, he alone refuses to listen to the voice of wisdom, and goes on still in his folly, and in his wickedness! how *weak* must he be, if indiscretion mark his efforts to do good; and how weak as well as wicked, when he continues to riot in the maddening revelry of those who know not God, who despise his commandments, and are daily working out their own ruin.

The efforts of prudence are assisted by ample mental resources, by all that extends the knowledge, enlarges the boundary of reason, strengthens the powers of the understanding, develops the habit of attention, enlivens the faculty of perception, augments the power of memory, encourages reflection, and gives energy to conscience; it is aided by trials and difficulties surmounted; by observation on the conduct of others; by the influence and association of the past, with the present and the future; it avails itself of the experience of remote ages; it imitates the conduct of the wise; and above all, the holy example of him who was without fault; it

refuses to listen to the feelings, and seeks to subjugate the passions, and give to the judgment, its legitimate sway over conduct; it is assisted by taste; by developing that delicacy of tact, a property of imagination, which consists in seizing at a glance, the minute and distant relations of things; and above all, by a constant and uniform reference of events and contingencies to the solidity and accuracy of that moral judgment, which is the result of conscience enlightened by the word, and influenced by the holy Spirit of God.

Prudence may exist in excess; as for instance, when it conducts its possessor to reserve, arising from uncontrouled distrust of those with whom we are placed in contact in society; he is fearful of exposing his character to the gaze of his fellow men, and therefore retires within himself, thinks, feels, lives for himself; trembles at the display of his sentiments; and anxious to avoid notoriety, as well as to escape from the pinnacle of observation, he shrinks back within the gloomy and inaccessible keep of reserve.

Prudence in excess may also lead to a want of candour and openness, to that concealment of fault, and that sophistical defence of error, which are inconsistent with simple uprightness and integrity. It is one of the last acquired lessons of wisdom, that nothing is really lost by the confession of having thought or acted wrong; the pride of the human bosom is such, that it cannot brook the idea of being lightly esteemed by

others; and although it be aware, that it will truly deserve less consideration for the attempt to conceal the first fault; yet the hope of maintaining an unblemished character with their fellows, and the fear of losing the weight which has hitherto attached to them, will often lead men into delinquencies of *principle* in order to hide an error of judgment or of feeling. But, to his own master he standeth or falleth; the great object is to convince the young of the importance of rectitude of conduct and motive; and to make them feel that God is every where present, and knoweth all things, and that we need not be ashamed to confess in society, what we are not afraid to think or to do, in the privacy of abstraction from the world's censure or approbation.

Taciturnity and a fondness for solitude, may also be the product of a similar principle; both are phenomena of the same cast, and consist in a refusal to employ the talent of conversation; and in the determination to avoid society altogether, and to court seclusion, rather than be compelled to bring a proper quota of information to the common stock; or to incur the risk of being discovered to be empty; or the odium of being thought proud and inaccessible, or haughty, selfish, and morose. A similar effect will sometimes be unfortunately produced on an individual, who may have been so placed in society, as not to meet with others of congenial minds, whose views and sentiments could assimilate; whose

pursuits were of the same generic character; who could agree in *most important* particulars, and *could agree to differ*, in the lesser shades of prejudice, or passion, or habit, or opinion; but who had on the contrary, associated only with those of opposite feelings and sentiments, who had rendered prominent their own peculiar views, and had constantly sought to bring them into contact with those of others, and even to place them in disadvantageous contrast; who had taken pleasure in wounding the mind, who had heedlessly wielded the shafts of wit and ridicule, and who had seized every occasion to stir up strife and argument, and make the worse appear the better part. Placed under such circumstances, the conscientious individual, resting on his integrity, but perhaps not able to cope with the more brilliant acquirements of his less principled adversary, feels the prudence of retiring into silence, lest by a feeble defence, and perhaps defeat, he should really be doing injury to the truth. There *may* possibly be prudence in this measure; but it will so generally wear the appearance of contumacy, that it will be better to seek for more accurate information, which added to rectitude of motive, will generally enable, even mediocrity of talent, to put to silence the sophistries of wicked men.

The excessive influence of prudence may also lead to a degree of *hesitation* in action, almost amounting to *indecision*, which may frequently be productive of inconvenience, and perhaps even

of still greater evils, by allowing the opportunity for action to pass by unimproved, till the period of successful exertion, has been in a great measure lost; and sometimes till the golden hour of energy has been wasted upon fruitless speculation, and has passed over never to be regained. This arises generally in circumstances of doubt, and danger, and difficulty; and from repeated calculation, and balancing the evil against the good, and adjusting all the proprieties of action, the time, the mode, the persons, the places, &c. The mind endeavours to take an enlarged view of all the circumstances, and contingencies of the case, and arrives by so doing, at a certain conclusion; but in the excess of its prudence, determines on reconsidering the whole question before it acts; this leads to procrastination; tomorrow arrives; each argument is again scrutinized with hypercritical severity; doubt ensues, and at the conclusion of this day, there is found to be less firmness of purpose than before; there are some points on which the opinion of a friend must be taken, and this contributes to greater uncertainty, till wearied and perplexed by conflicting arguments, and by deepening shades of indecision, prudence calculates, and reviews, and calculates again, until it is incapable of continuing the process with accuracy and effect: it can no longer follow out a conclusion to its results, and it does not act at all, till exertion is either impossible or fruitless. This habit must be counteracted, or notwithstanding the very best

intentions, the character will become irritable, wavering, not to be depended upon, and vacillating. It is to be obviated by accustoming the individual always to *act* upon the best possible information it can obtain; to decide upon the evidence before it, and to follow up its decisions by cautious, but firm, unhesitating conduct. The *unstable* cannot excel; they will be guilty of great injustice, and will produce unhappiness to themselves; for the state of suspense previous to decision is one of great anxiety, and most injurious to the health of the body, the peace of mind, and the well-being of the general system.

Once more, prudence will sometimes lead to excessive scrupulousness in action; the fear of doing wrong will induce it not only to be careful as to the character of conduct, but also to doubt, where no room for doubt exists; to be suspicious; to reject not only every equivocal line of action, but also to avoid that which is really good and praiseworthy. Where this feeling operates, it not only renders *the person* ridiculous, but also does injury to the cause with which he may be associated; since it commonly fastens upon really trifling objections, magnifies them into all the gigantic form, the frightful mien, the threatening expression, the imposing attitude, and the fearful menace of some monster of iniquity, capable of bearing down before it all the barriers which may have been successfully reared against the inroads of vice. Far be it from us to weaken the strong holds of virtue, or to diminish the length and

breadth of that line of demarcation which must for ever separate them from the mock majesty of vice; far be it from us to diminish the just horror of that which is wrong, or to blunt the keenness of conscience; far be it from us to obscure the form and lineaments of rectitude of motive and conduct, or to soften the native deformity and ugliness of wickedness; but we *do wish* that the objections of the good should be wisely formed, and that they should stand out in tangible and undeniable being; we *do wish* that the monitions of conscience should be based on enlightened judgment, not on the prejudices of the ignorant and the weak; we *do wish* that the evils to be avoided should not be the phantoms of an unreal existence, or the creatures of folly and credulity; and we *do wish* that the scruples of *the good* should be also the scruples of *the wise;* that they should be supported by reason, strengthened by reflection, and built on the laws of God.

Lastly, excessive prudence leads to the anticipation of evil. The mind is desirous of observing circumspection; hence it becomes reserved, from the fear of those with whom it is associated; it falls into the error of concealment from the dread of confessing its faults; it becomes taciturn, lest it should incur the obloquy or ridicule of impertinent compeers; it hesitates and is undecided from the apprehension of doing wrong; it is vacillating from the fear of miscalculating the grounds of its conduct; it indulges a variety of scruples, lest it should occasion offence to the

weak consciences of others; and thus, by the constant expectation of evil, it is really led to the uniform dread of its approach; and life is passed between the danger of doing wrong, and the fear lest it should not do right, or of doing right, at an unfavourable period. But knowledge is power; and with the aid of modesty and diffidence *it* will supersede all these unreal terrors, and lead to firm and dignified continuance in well-doing.

Section V. *On Gratitude—on Ingratitude.*

a. Gratitude.

Gratitude is the return of a sensitive and justly balanced mind, accorded to a benefactor, either in action, or at least in the wishes of the heart, for benefits previously conferred. It is the dew of blessing upon the thirsty land, which is returned in fruitfulness, breathed out in a purified atmosphere, exhaled in fragrance, and exhibited in the freshness of life, and in varied tints of inimitable beauty. It is the humble offering of the feeble for protection; of the needy for support; of the weak for strength; of the houseless and friendless, for countenance and defence; of the sorrowing for consolation; of the widow, and the orphan, and the destitute, for that compassionate care which their situation demands. It is the offspring of religion; it lives within its circle; is

governed by its motives; is cherished by the Spirit of Grace; thrives in its beams; withers in their absence; is fostered by the ray of principle, and chilled when deprived of its influence; it is rendered delicate and noble by feeling, while it is annihilated by selfishness. Too frequently does this principle degenerate into a mere form of polite words without meaning, or any corresponding mental emotion, when exercised towards man: too frequently does it become the merely customary thanksgiving, the dissociated expression of unheeded gratitude towards God, whose unwearied kindness is hourly exhibited in the events of his providence, and in the designs of his grace; the emotion of the heart has changed sides with the customary expression of automatic thankfulness; and that which should be the remembrance of kindness and obligation, accompanied by the desire of requiting it, has become a mere form of words, pronounced by the thoughtless lip, and uttered by the thankless heart; the impression of mercies received has been dissipated by the frivolities of the day; too often has it been supplanted by acts of hostility and rebellion; the recollection of obligation has become irksome, and has even sometimes led to a dislike of the person by whom favours have been accorded, and to alienation from him. Thus has it been with man's wicked heart towards his highest benefactor; *his* constant care and unnumbered blessings seem only to have aroused a spirit of forgetfulness of *his* claims to gratitude

and love. Man lives in the atmosphere which surrounds him, and cannot exist without it, yet he employs his breath in blaspheming the name of his Creator and Preserver; he rejoices in the light of the sun, yet employs its beams for every purpose except that of doing the will of God, and of living to *his* glory; he hails with delight the removal of its glorious ray, and courts the returning season of repose, yet again devotes it to the perpetration of deeds of darkness with greater impunity; he is gratified by the revolving seasons, and yet each spring and autumn, summer and winter, find his heart more hardened, more distant from doing the will of the Supreme, the righteous Governor of the universe; he is indebted to Providence for health, and the continued play of his bodily organs, together with all the comforts connected with them, and yet yields that body as the servant of sin; he is disobedient, unthankful, unholy.

While then gratitude may be pronounced to *be the memory of the heart*, it can only be received with this limitation; *it is so in a state of innocence alone*, or *as it may have regained* some portion of its high original, by the renewing influence of divine grace; as the desert may have again blossomed, and burst into fruitfulness; as the winter of distance from God may have been exchanged for the invigorating beams of the sun of righteousness. In every work of God, however, the traces of justice as well as of mercy are discernible; and as gratitude ought to flow from a recollection

of the feeling of past kindness, and to prove a centre of happiness in the retrospect; so is that very memory a source of punishment to the ungrateful: the broken images of unrequited benevolence haunt their days, fill them with impressions of remorse, and disturb their sleep with dreams of horror; the consciousness of deserving ill from those around him, makes a coward of the man; he trembles in darkness, finds an enemy in every undefined form, and nourishes the plant of anguish in his bosom, even from the very *complacency* of those whom he has injured, and from whom he might have expected a very different return.

Genuine gratitude does not consist in profession; it does not exhaust itself in mere words; the assurances of feeling are very little worth, unless they are attended by practical consequences; *deeds, not words,* are the test of the existence of this principle, as well as of its measure; for however a grateful individual may want the power or the opportunity of showing his thankfulness, yet the feeling will be prevalent, and will avail itself of every means of exhibiting its tendency. It will not find *excuses* for indolence in its peculiar situation, but will *invent occasions* for showing what is the real bias of the heart.

The influence of gratitude should be permanent, not the transient feeling of momentary excitement, but the high and *principled* emotion of the heart. This unfortunately is not its usual course, for however deeply it may be felt upon the im-

mediate spur of the occasion which has developed its exercise, it is commonly less and less vivid, in proportion to the real amount of the obligation conferred; and as the present period of time is more and more distant from the reception of the benefit. The former of these causes arises from the indulgence of that silly pride and vanity, which recoils from the feeling of having received an obligation, and the consciousness of having needed it; and the second from that law of nature, by which all impressions which are not studiously encouraged, become fainter in their colours, fade, and are almost completely effaced, by the mere inertness of memory; a law, which in the present instance, is commonly more than usually operative, from the studious desire with which man remembers to forget the kindnesses he has received; and from that awkward feeling of dependence, which arises as its consequence, and which his haughty spirit cannot brook!

It is then a noble and elevated sentiment; it is to be perfected by education, and by just views of the misery, and helplessness, and feebleness of man, his need of support, his constant requirement of mercy, his entire dependence for every blessing he enjoys on him who dispenses the largess of his bounty to his creatures; and the absolute duty of evincing gratitude, and seeking to please *Him*, by doing his will and living to his glory. Gratitude to our fellow-man will necessarily flow from a heart which is filled with thankfulness to its God and Saviour, the great design

of education, therefore, will be to develop the exercise of this virtue towards the Supreme; and *when* the heart has been brought to feel its natural destitution of all that is good; when it has been taught to know the importance of its common mercies, and not to overlook them because of their multiplicity, and invariable continuance; when it has been led to ascribe its preservation from evil and danger, its health and comfort, to the protecting and munificent agency of God's providence; when it has been deeply imbued with the conviction that it cannot think a good thought or do that which is acceptable to God, except through the aid of the Holy Spirit; when it feels that its proud and stubborn, or vain and volatile heart, cannot be thankful unless it receive the power and disposition from on high; when it it really acknowledges the numberless occasions for *gratitude,* and is at the same time aware that the excitement of this feeling is one of the highest causes for its devotion to Him whose spirit has awakened it, " for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee;" (1 Chronicle xxix. 14.) when it is taught to ascribe all its wisdom and knowledge, all its intellectual capacity, and power of acquisition; every talent, every good desire, every moral principle, every virtuous sentiment, every benevolent action, to *Him* who convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and who leads and guides his people into the way of all truth; when the heart rejoices in the righteous government of God,

and rests assured that the seeming unequal distribution of good will, by and by, be rendered perfectly clear, and that what he knows not now, he shall know hereafter; when he is gladdened by every fresh accession of strength to the cause of truth, and by every degree of extension given to the Redeemer's kingdom on earth; when he feels his hourly dependence for preservation from danger, but above all from the influence of sin; and when he acknowledges his own sinfulness, and need of a Saviour, and can humbly hope that he has been enabled to place his reliance, his entire confidence on that friend of sinners, then it is that the great enemies to gratitude, selfishness, and pride, and forgetfulness, and vanity will be vanquished; and that a deep feeling of thankfulness to his fellow-men, will arise out of this humbling, yet encouraging view of the causes of gratitude to his maker, and his God.

b. Ingratitude.

Ingratitude is not merely a negative of gratitude; it consists not only in the absence of a thankful heart, and benevolent expression of that emotion; it is not merely a thanklessness of disposition, but consists in a positive act of vice, in that emotion which really prompts to do an injury to those from whom we may have received kindness. It is very generally the result of vanity, which cannot tolerate the idea of that species of tacit supremacy, which the benefactor exercises upon the indivi-

dual whom he obliges; it is sometimes the consequence of a positive destitution of principle, the absence of all correct feeling, the presence of all that is opposed to just views, the reckless disposition of one who receives blessing only to return cursing, and the measure of whose enmity is alone equalled by the extent of his obligations: it is sometimes the result of carelessness, that thoughtless and forgetful disposition, upon which present sensation has very little future influence; and from which the impression of benefit conferred is soon obliterated; the emotion of gratitude is so transient, that it is lost as an abiding principle; and except in the mere feeling of the moment, and action perhaps grounded on that feeling, and therefore sincere at the time, leaves not a trace behind: it arises sometimes in the bosom which has been chilled by drinking deeply into the spirit of the world, and influenced by its hollow, specious insincerity, and corrupted by its cool and calculating selfishness, and is then satisfied with exchanging ineffective profession for genuine principle: at other times it originates in pride, that feeling which lost heaven to the arch apostate; that disposition of the heart, which is averse from receiving an obligation at all, and which, in union with self-conceit, produces in the obliged, the state of mind, in which he thinks, or imagines that he has not been recompensed *according to his merits*, of the extent of which he conceives a very high idea; while on the contrary, the benefactor not only thinks he has done

too much, but does not hesitate to show that he thinks so, and thus to excite that painful feeling of dependence, which in the human mind, constituted as it now is, and modified by society, opinion, and prejudice, almost always excites a desire to be emancipated from the galling bond of obligation, and to walk in the freedom of that liberty which allows of his acting without controul, so long at least as he is governed by the rules of right; and exempts him from considering the caprices of his patron. Ambition is a frequent source of ingratitude, since in the march of its unamiable career, it knows no feeling and acknowledges no principle which may interfere with the object of its pursuit; it considers no interest but its own, and avails itself of the assistance of others, only so far as it may be conducive to its ends. This vice is also found in frequent conjunction with envy; and wherever the latter passion is developed towards him, who has it in his power to become a benefactor, then the sentiment of gratitude is extinguished, because when envy is experienced for the *sum* of our friend's good things, there will be entirely superseded a feeling of gratude for that portion of them which he may have been disposed to impart. Again, *avarice* is not an unfrequent source of ingratitude; the love of money is the root of all evil; and so it will be sometimes seen, that an individual upon some frivolous pretext, refuses to pay the debts he has justly contracted; and this principle extends not merely to pecuniary claims, but to every kind and

degree of moral obligation, from whatever source it may have originated. It must, however, be recollected, that he who feels the full value of the benefit he confers, should also be sensible of the weight of the gratitude of the persons obliged; or he himself participates in the ingratitude, and is in fact *ungrateful* for the blessing of *gratitude* which he receives. And lastly, ingratitude is often a negative state, at least to a certain extent; there is an apathy of feeling destructive to that quick sensibility, in which the very essence of the emotion of gratitude consists; there is a feebleness and infirmity of the heart, by which it seems to be rendered incapable of that genuine action, so necessary to the active exercise of this virtue, and without which its employment will degenerate into the mere emotion of passion, without aim or object.

Such are the sources of this fatal vice, which sullies wherever it approaches; which alienates the heart from God; which strangles the first rising of virtuous emotion; which fills the bosom with many hateful feelings; which haunts it with the perverted images of fancy, invented as excuses or palliations, for the omission of an obvious duty of gratitude; and which, instead of raising the heart to the Author and Giver of all good, debases it to the consideration of selfish and secondary causes, as if by their own prudence and strength, they had obtained all the good they possess; as if "the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty,"

were not the Lord's; as if it were not in *his* hands only to "make great, and to give strength to all; as if it were not true, that "our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding;" as if it were not true, that all the good we possess "cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own;" and, as if we practically disbelieved that God "tries the heart, and has pleasure in uprightness." 1 Chronicles, xxix. &c. &c. Strange is it that the highest reach of ingratitude, the forgetfulness of the goodness of God, and a studied rejection of the offers of his mercy, should pass unnoticed; or at the very most, that they should excite no feelings of astonishment; while the existence of ingratitude to man produces an extensive sympathy for those who suffer from its baneful influence; where it is discovered, it is punished by the indignation excited in the breast of fellowmen; a feeling which is deepened into passion by the contemplation of the *victims of this vice*, and of the painful consequences which have now resulted from its agency. And yet, we pass unnoticed, continued hostility and the basest ingratitude to God; we pass over as a tale that is told, the horrors which have been produced by sin; we have no sympathy for the misery, which has resulted from it, and we scarcely ever think that we ourselves have been *in spirit* participators in the tragic scenes which the ingratitude of man has accomplished towards his Saviour and Redeemer. A most deplorable evidence of the blindness of the human mind, and of the alienation of the

heart from good, as well as of its perversion towards all that is evil.

This very indignation which is felt towards the ungrateful, is in itself an expression of the evil nature of this vice; which is farther shewn by the award of conscience, and by the impossibility of scrutinizing the heart, without giving rise to a deep feeling of remorse; by the cruel, though unavailing regrets, which sooner or later, attend the pathway of the ungrateful, and prepare for the bed of sickness, the sleepless night of sorrow, and the deepening shades of old age and infirmity, *a pillow of thorns*, which will render uneasy the softest couch, and throw a darkening cloud of anguish upon every situation of pain. This deep feeling of the mind is also exhibited by the conscious blush of shame, and by the desire of avoiding a benefactor, towards whom ingratitude has been observed; both circumstances however, which shew that the mind is not quite destitute of feeling; that it is not yet so hardened by this unfeeling vice, as to have completely extinguished the voice of conscience, so powerfully exerted, as to make a coward of the man; to make him turn his back, not upon his enemy, but his friend, to make him flee, not before the power of hostile invasion, but from the tacit rebuke contained in the presence of a good and injured man; to subject him to an automatic influence, from which he cannot escape,—an influence which constitutes him a monument of vice, confessed to all mankind, and whose amazing power is capable of

producing a crimson glow upon the surface, by one impetuous and instantaneous rush of blood to the extreme vessels, particularly those of the face and neck, and which in a succeeding moment recoils back to its citadel the heart, and leaves the surface pale and bloodless, heightened by the contrast with the preceding excitement. Nothing can more distinctly shew the evil nature of this vice, than the occurrence just detailed, in spite of every effort to prevent it; nothing can more clearly prove, that man was originally good, and that he has only ceased to be so, under the agency of some perverting cause, when we find him so constituted, as to possess a purely automatic monitor, a natural and instinctive judgment, an immediate and necessary punishment, so inseparably connected with the commission of evil, that until the sense of iniquity has been quenched in the darkness of desertion, it exists, and exerts an influence which *will be* heard, which produces discomfort to the individual, and holds him up to the indignation of his fellow. True it is, that *the blush* is not *always* an evidence of feeling; that it is not *always* to be expounded as the product of shame, or conscious guilt; it will *sometimes* be excited by some indirect and scarcely definable emotion; it *may* be produced simply by the idea, of becoming the object of attention to others; and it will often be occasioned by the apprehension, that our manners, or habits, or opinions, or sentiments, or words, or looks may be misconstrued: but it will be seen at once, that all these

are perversions of the feeling arising out of our social eccentricities, and only prove from its abuse, that the association was originally intended to pass sentence upon conduct, to warn of danger, and to punish the disobedient.

Lastly, the evil of ingratitude is shewn by the incapacity for *enjoying* the goods thus obtained by the kindness of others, by their unrequited confidence, by their cruelly abused benevolence. But so it is: the stern eye of justice is fixed upon the ungrateful, and the curse of unhappiness rests upon them; their very blessings are embittered, and prove sources of misery; the idea of their ill-gotten comforts haunts them in the busiest, or the most dissipated scenes of life; they fly in vain from the inflictions of care; the illusion of peace vanishes from their bosom; and it does so, because the image of ingratitude is frequently presented, and casts its gloomy shadow over the recollection of the past, the enjoyment of the present, and the anticipations of futurity.

So perverted may be the heart, that on many occasions these consequences do not follow; but when they do not, it is because the effect has been dissociated from the primary cause, by some secondary and corrupting agency, powerful enough to arrest the original movements, and to develop others of a painful and injurious nature. Such then is *ingratitude!* a vice too prevalent in the world, and against which, the young cannot be too carefully guarded. Not only should they be

instructed, to avoid it in themselves, but also not to be surprised, when they meet with it in others. As gratitude *from others* is not to become a motive to action; so ingratitude is not to be employed as an excuse for inaction, for slumbering at our post, for ceasing those energetic exertions, which are a duty we owe to those around us. The young must not be taught to expect gratitude; but they must be cautioned not to be disappointed when they experience its opposite vice. This is important as a *principle of action;* for it happens too frequently, that where benevolent conduct has been founded principally on feeling and education, it will be blasted by the adverse gale of ingratitude,—a gale which only shews the greater need of the exercise of charity for those around us, and which should induce us to cling more earnestly to the wreck of our hopes, and never to abandon it, while there remains a chance of doing good to ourselves or others; much less, while we can do our duty to God, though we cannot be useful to man.

Ingratitude is to be most sedulously corrected by education, and more especially by the removal of its exciting causes; by teaching the young, that the only worthy object of pursuit is superiority of goodness, and that *principle,* not *feeling,* is to be their guide through life; by shewing them, that he who forgets a kindness, is degraded below the *irrational brute,* who repays his benefactor with *some* shew of requital, while *reasonable*

man, too frequently seeks to do him harm; by teaching them, that the spirit of the world is at enmity with God, and that pure and undefiled religion consists in keeping themselves unspotted with its vices, in forgetting the selfishness of momentary gratification, and in the sincere desire of doing the whole will of God towards his creatures; by sapping the foundation of pride, and by shewing the necessity for humility; by exemplifying the truth, that the only real liberty consists in obedience to the commands of God, according to their spirit; by obviating the influence of avarice and ambition; by moderating the pretensions of envy; by calling into action, that delicate sensibility of feeling, which prompts its possessor to receive a benefit with modest pleasure, and to repay it with unmingled delight; and by enforcing the evil nature of this vice, and the miseries to which its indulgence inevitably leads.

Section VI.—*On Patience—Impatience—Meekness.*

a. Patience.

Patience is a virtue, the exercise of which enables us to bear afflictions and calumnies, with constancy and calmness of mind, and with a ready submission to the will of God; it teaches

us to yield to the higher privations of life, without a murmur; gives cheerfulness and equanimity when the will is crossed, when our hopes are blasted, or intentions defeated, and our designs contravened; it fortifies us to support disappointment without vexation, and to bear the contumely of the world, the calumnies of acquaintance, and the unkindness of friends without an angry feeling; it preserves us from envying the lot of those who appear more fortunate in this world's goods; it enables us to exercise that charity which beareth all things; defends us from restlessness in sickness, from irritability in pain, from excessive anxiety in sorrow, from the torment of selfishness under narrow circumstances, from the blast of penury, the storms of adversity, and the winter of destitution; it supplants anger, places a tight rein upon ambition, reconciles conflicting passions, dissipates the vapours of ennui, and leaves no room for the exercise of the gloomier forms of disgust, hatred, resentment, and vengeance. Patience should be exercised on the lesser, as well as on the more important occasions of life; on those lighter instances of every day occurrence which provoke irritability and fretfulness, without being of sufficient importance to develop a more powerful passion. The employment of this virtue is essentially connected with peace of mind; for "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope." Romans v. 3, 4.

Patience is universal in its application, and energetic in its influence; "be patient towards all men," (1 Thessalonians v. 14,) rendering to all their due, and taking care that it should have its perfect work. Patience moderates the desires, and leads us to look forward though they be not immediately gratified; and to pursue those which are lawful with unwearied energy, and undaunted perseverance; and still to hope for their accomplishment. Lo, the husbandman "waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain." James v. 7. In the night of distress, even in the deepest affliction; when the hand of Providence has removed our greatest comforts; when unexpected accident or disease has snatched from us our nearest relatives; when the hedge about ourselves, and our houses, and all that we have appears to have been broken down; when our oxen, and our asses, and our sheep, and our camels, and our servants have been destroyed, or we have been deprived in some way or other of all that we have; then it is that we should bless the name of the Lord; then it is that we should "take the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience;" then it is that we should "count them happy which endure;" then it is, that having heard "of the patience of Job," and "having seen the end of the Lord;" that the Lord is very "pitiful, and of tender mercy," (James v. 10, 11,)

we too should be inspirited to persevere in well doing; then it is, that we should hope for deliverance, and "wait with patience for it;" (Romans viii. 25;) then should "patience have her perfect work," that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing;" (James i. 4;) and that we "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Romans xv. 4.

Again, patience forbids the employment of unlawful means to extricate ourselves from difficulties, pecuniary straights, or embarrassments, and untoward circumstances of every kind: all forbidden methods of obtaining money, every species of gambling, and game of hazard, every appeal to chance, every kind of lottery; every sinister agency; the employment of the wicked to compass our plans; in fact, every deviation from the strict law of rectitude, is expressly proscribed, for "I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them which have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. And they shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the

earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven to darkness." Isaiah viii. 17, 19—22.

One of the greatest trials of patience, consists in the calumny of those around us, and in their suspicion of our actions, but above all in the misconstruction of our motives, even by the good; and yet under these circumstances we should "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him;" we should not be impatient, because of "man who prospereth in his way," "because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass," (Psalm xxxvii. 7,) but we should wait "patiently for the Lord who has inclined to us, and will hear our cry;" (Psalm lx. 1;) we should acquiesce in his dispensations, who will bring forth "our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day:" and in all circumstances of trial, and difficulty, and temptation; when our wishes, and inclinations, and present ease, and worldly prosperity, and advantageous connexion, and the good opinion of the many, and the advancement of ourselves, and our friends, must all be sacrificed to a sense of duty; and when we must pursue a long course of conduct most adverse to our feelings, and therefore painful; and "when the youths shall faint, and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

Again, when disease assails us, and decrepitude advances, and pain and restlessness are our constant attendants, and the last enemy approaches, and the final struggle is at hand, and strength fails, and the energies of the body are exhausted, and the manifestations of mind are feeble and failing, and the judgment is insecure, and the reason tottering, and reflection well nigh extinguished, then it is, that "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God, shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and it shall be said, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation." Isaiah xxv. 9, &c. And in the immediate prospect of dissolution, and of that change which then passes upon all men, for that all have sinned, we shall exclaim with Job, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come."

Once more, patience is a principle which leads us to bear with injury and transgression, and to seek rather the reformation than the punishment of the offender; for "though oppression maketh a wise man mad," yet "the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit; and anger resteth in the bosom of fools." Ecclesiastes vii. 7, 8, 9.

Lastly, patience is sometimes required in yielding willingly to privations which we endure, as public taxes, and imposts of different kinds; yet

here also the line is clear, for we are expressly enjoined, "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; for so is the will of God, that with well-doing, ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; as *free*, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." 1 Peter ii. 13—16. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds." Hebrews xii. 1—3.

Such is patience! such the frequent occasions for its exercise, such its vast importance, such its beneficial influence, such its paramount duty, such its transcendant reward, such its power of transforming its subject into the image of Christ. And shall the christian parent consider this virtue as of secondary importance? It is true indeed, that the principal occasions for its exercise, do not occur in infancy; but unless the principle be early developed,—unless the virtue be constantly exercised, and its opposite vice be uniformly opposed, its action will become every hour more difficult: and eagerness of desire in the infant, will become impetuosity in the child, passion in the youth, and settled impatience and fretfulness in the adult: neglect of early discipline will have

injured the future character, or will have fastened upon it a load which will impede its progress, sow its path through life with nettles and thorns, oppose it with constant difficulty, water its couch with tears, embitter the relish for the goods of providence, destroy thankfulness of heart, and constitute the fretful, irritable, wayward child of undisciplined inclination, encompassed with pain and sorrow of his own creation, and very little fitted for the duties, or the pleasures of Christianity!

b. Meekness.

The term meekness is employed to describe a temper of mind, which is not easily provoked; which leads to the endurance of injuries, without exciting the desire of revenge; and comprehends the idea of quiet submission to the will of God! It is for the most part a passive virtue, the exercise of which is a peculiar embellishment to the Christian. There is however a condition of the young mind termed meekness, which it is necessary to distinguish from the principle just characterized; since in the latter, the hand of severe discipline is not borne well; it appears to *crush*, rather than to *direct*,—and to moulder away, instead of supporting the edifice of moral conduct. The very slightest reprimand will often produce a flood of tears, and leave a permanent impression of sorrow, far more extensive than could have been imagined, or ever was intended by the parental instructor. It is difficult to manage a

child, who is heart-broken upon the smallest reproof, or even upon the exertion of the mildest form of coercive authority. It is not easy to reconcile the discipline of government, and to lead the mind into the right way, without producing an effect, which might destroy the energy, and freedom of action; and to keep up a sufficient *surveillance* upon the conduct, without leading its subject to the very verge of hypocrisy. It is of great consequence not to daunt the meek, or to extinguish the germ of independent action: it is of equal consequence to educate a *spirit of meekness*,—a temper of mind most favourable to correctness of christian conduct, most ornamental to the character, when supported by freedom of choice, by the enlarged decisions of judgment, and by the ultimate ground of appeal in every case, viz. the revealed will of God: but most readily conducive to error from mere feebleness, rendering its possessor easily assailable by temptation, opinion, prejudice, and passion; leading him to uncertainty and vacillation in judgment; to unjust compliances with the views of others; and finally, to disguise, deceit, and prevarication.

The management of this character, is not by *severity* or *neglect*: both would prove equally fatal; the former by inducing *duplicity;* and the latter, *lawlessness* of taste and feeling, of opinion and conduct. The great object is to *lead* with a gentle, yet firm, devoted, and unyielding hand; and at the same time, by constant exertion, to

strengthen the understanding, to enlarge the views, confirm the judgment, and subdue too great susceptibility; to avoid punishment; to conduct the mind to reason and reflection, rather than to feeling; to accustom it to review its own actions, and to arrive at its own moral decisions; and thus to save it from the shock which it would experience by the violence of its grief, and which if frequently and fully repeated, would form that feeble erring being, which would consist in *too much* action; which would be perpetually exhausting its energies in the exercise of principles, where no such exercise would be required; and which from the fear of doing wrong, would be constantly endeavouring to do right in the wrong place: feebleness and excitability would be its prominent characteristics; while firmness, and strength, and uniformity of principle, would be its grand wants.

To return, this pseudo-meekness will be best eradicated, by cultivating the genuine principle,—by fostering that spirit of acquiescence in the disposal of Infinite wisdom, which will secure the calm unruffled sunshine of the soul,—the peace which passes understanding, which is not disturbed by the collision of injury, and whose immediate offspring are, the forgiveness of enemies, pity and compassion for those from whom we have suffered, the subjugation of resentment, and its substitution for the desire to do good to those who have despitefully used us. This may be a

hard lesson; but it is the duty, and the privilege of the Christian. It *is his duty*, for it *is the command* of God; "take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am *meek*, and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew xi. 29. "Whose adorning, let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price." 1 Peter iii. 4. Again, meekness is a fruit of that wisdom, which in the Holy Scriptures, is placed for the love of God, and obedience to his will and commandments; for, "who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge amongst you? Let him shew out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom." James iii. 13.

But it is also the Christian's privilege, since "blessed are the meek, for they shall *inherit* the earth;" so powerful is this principle, that victory and conquest are promised to it; so true is it, that the weapons of the gospel are omnipotent; and that while anger would frequently lead to injustice, and passion would be always sinful, and always accompanied with a loss of self-possession, and of influence, and valour would be useless, and courage would be thrown away, and hatred would be a source of constant torment, and the gratification of revenge would be more than equipoised by the misery of remorse; and while the exercise of every one of these passions would be accompanied by a corresponding loss of respectability, of moral dignity, of real worth, of peace of

mind, and of intellectual influence: genuine, humble, modest, god-like meekness "shall inherit the earth;" for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but to him who lives to the glory of God.

In the present world, surrounded by difficulty and danger, with our knowledge circumscribed, and our way rendered dark and obscure by sin, and ignorance, and prejudice, and passion, the greatest boons which we require are to be led into the way of truth, to be preserved from error, and to have the means of our information enlarged. These blessings are promised to the meek; "the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way," (Psalm xxv. 9.) and "the Lord lifteth up the meek; but casteth the wicked down to the ground." Psalm cxlvii. 6.

Again, as sinful creatures we need a Saviour; as convinced of our wretchedness, we require deliverance; a prey to the guilt and torment of sin, we seek for peace; enslaved by passion, we require the freedom of those who are ransomed of Christ; obstructed in our path by the material cloud which invests us, we require the aid of the Sun of Righteousness to dissipate that cloud; and so it is the office of Christ "to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isaiah lxi. 1.

And lastly, it is our privilege as well as our duty to imitate the character of Him, who "when

he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously;" (1 Peter ii. 23.) of whom it has been said, that "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Isaiah liii. 7.

With such high authority for the exercise of this virtue, surely meekness will not be stigmatized as want of spirit, *even* by those who profess to see in the character of Christ only an example for imitation; but in those who do not thus rob the Saviour of his glory, who are really rational Christians, and who rejoice to lay hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, it cannot be that they should neglect to cultivate this spirit, or lightly esteem its influence; it cannot be that they should be laughed or frowned out of their religion; it cannot be that they should be followers of Christ, and yet be imbued with the love of retaliation, the *manly* temper of resentment, the *noble* passion of revenge, the *benevolent* principle of vengeance, the *Christian* spirit of murder; it cannot be that they should be influenced at the same time by the dispositions of the demon, and by the love of God; it cannot be that they should be slaves of Satan, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven!

Section VII. *On Justice.*

Justice consists in the unbiassed appreciation of conduct, and in the meed of applause, or disapprobation which results, from the judgment thus formed of human action, and motive, and principle. It is the even-handed award of truth, based on religious principle, uninfluenced by sinister or selfish motives, supported by duty, and proposing no other object for its end, than the punishment of the evil-doer, and the reward of virtuous conduct. But as "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not;" (Ecclesiastes vii. 20.) so neither is there a perfect example of justice to be found except in the character of Jehovah; and God alone is essentially righteous and just; *He* also is the fountain of justice, both in his nature, which is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and in all his proceedings with his creatures; for "justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Psalm lxxxix. 14.

It is then an attribute of justice to be tempered by mercy; but mercy does not supersede justice. To forgive, to blot out the transgressions of his people, to remember them no more against them, to cast them into the depths of the sea; aye, more, even to spare the wicked for the sake

of the good, and to suspend his judgments upon the former, to give them farther space for repentance; to be changed from his fierce anger by the tear of godly sorrow, and to be reconciled to sinners by their turning to God, and faith in the sacrifice of Christ; these are his delight. Thus, in the memorable instance of patriarchal pleading with God, "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis xviii. 25. Jehovah promises to spare the cities of Sodom, if there were found in them ten righteous persons, for *their sakes*. But while the attribute of mercy shines most conspicuously, it is also true, that justice demands the ultimate execution of his wrath upon the finally impenitent; for as God is *holy*, *he* must hate sin, and must punish the wilfully obstinate, in order to magnify *his* law and make it honourable; and "*he* shall not judge after the light of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness shall be the girdle of his reins." Isaiah xi. 3, 4, 5. *This* is a most important principle of justice; and it is one on which mistakes are so frequently made, that it cannot be too distinctly marked, or too sedulously inculcated as an early bias of education. There is no cruelty in justice; when a man deliberately pre-

fers evil to good, and with a knowledge of consequences, chooses the former for its immediate attractions, there can be no cruelty in reaping the misery with which it stands connected: if he voluntarily subject himself to the contagion of the plague: if he contract the disease, and be destroyed by it, we may pity the individual, but there is no injustice done except by *himself*.

In the present world, there is a deplorable want of justice: "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." Isaiah lix. 14. On whichever side we cast our eyes, we shall often find the just and the upright among the poor, and the defenceless, while injustice shall be rendered sacred by wealth and power. The selfish, the ignorant, the conceited, are often preferred, to the disinterested, the well-informed, and the humble. Impudence, and imperturbable self-possession, frequently bear rule over humble worth, and diffident integrity; passion and prejudice often stifle the voice of principle; the monitions of conscience are silenced by the influence of interest; judgment and opinion bend before the shrine of fashion; reason and reflection yield their sway to the agency of custom and habit; the maxims of a narrow policy, and present expediency are exchanged for the immutable truths of the Christian religion; vice is rendered triumphant, and is invested with a fictitious garb of virtue, that it may give currency to its dicta, and potency to its influence;

that which is evil, is called good, and that which is really good is shunned as evil, or perverted by some epithet which renders it opprobrious; anger, avarice, and ambition are fostered, while the forgiveness of injuries, universal benevolence, and a humble desire to fill the station appointed by Providence, are stigmatized as evidences of being righteous over much; pride, envy, hatred, and intrigue are cherished, while the humble, the charitable, and the sincere are sneered at, as wanting a knowledge of the world; virtue and vice constantly change places, and are perversely attired with their reciprocal claims to attention; real merit is forgotten, and splendid worthlessness is frequently successful, so that in this world, "truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;" a simple, yet sufficient reason, why, in reference to the character of *him* who is pre-eminently just, there *must be* a day of retribution, when all these seeming inequalities of condition will be reconciled and adjusted. But the young mind, must be *prepared* for this injustice of the world's estimate, and must be *taught*, not to be lightly moved away from its principles by this apparent discountenance of virtue; it must be fortified against injustice, misrepresentation, and obloquy; and must be strengthened to sustain the steady helm of virtue, amidst the conflicting elements of this world's jargon, this intellectual Babel, by which man vainly thinks to rear an edifice of safety for himself, that he may reach his groveling heaven, without the intervention of Almighty aid.

But on the contrary, there is a placid dignity in justice, which gives to its possessor, however humble, an influence which is denied to wealth, or talent, or splendour, or rank, or power, when dissociated from it, and alone; for deprive even *majesty* of its externals, and what is it but a mere jest? But integrity of action, and justice of judgment and opinion, throw a clear and steady light around the pathway of the just, for "the path of the just, is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" it is as the sun which dispels the gloomy night of ignorance, chases away the morning clouds of indistinct perception and inadequate reason, dissipates the mists of prejudice and error; extinguishes by its superior light, the dim twinkling of the night of moral philosophy; unveils the wide world of maxim and opinion, and slumbering motive, and secret design; and continues until it has filled the earth with the rays of its meridian splendour, and lighted up the reason of every man who cometh into it, with the beams of religious principle. It is this alone on which justice can be based; and it is to this, that the young must be constantly directed; here they will learn that the prosperity of the wicked, is of short duration, for a man shall not "be established by wickedness; but the root of the righteous shall not be moved;" (Proverbs xii. 3.) here they will observe that while the unjust shall be snared by "the transgression of his lips," "the just shall come out of trouble," (Pro-

verbs xii. 13.) shall be carried harmless through the difficulties and trials of life, and shall become a safeguard to himself, and a blessing to others; they will learn, that the just are the peculiar objects of God's watchful providence, and that they shall be finally recompensed in their integrity, for "the lip of truth shall be established for ever; and there shall no evil happen to the just:" (Prov. xii. 19, 21.) they will learn that justice is a defence to the good man, and that it gives him a sacredness of character, which is not only a munition to himself, but descends in blessings upon his family; for "the just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him:" (Proverbs xx. 7.) they will learn that a principle of justice is a means of recovery from error, or injudicious conduct, and that however a man's judgment may have been perverted by feeling, however his conduct may have deviated from rectitude, under the influence of surprise, or inconsideration, or emotion, or passion; however he may have formed hasty opinions, and may have been betrayed into indiscreet observations; yet that with the simple desire of *doing justly*, he possesses the means of returning to the path of sincerity, "for a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again;" (Proverbs xxiv. 16.) and lastly, they will learn that the influence of the just is great, not only over relatives, and friends, and connexions, and neighbours, but upon society at large; not only upon individuals and upon motives, but upon large masses of mankind, and

upon their actions; not only immediate, but remote and contingent; not only present, but abiding, even long after the example has ceased to exist, since the memory of the just is blessed." Proverbs x. 7.

A most important principle of justice is, that it be impartial; that it do not form its judgment from hearing only one side of a question, but that it should ever listen to the version of the several individuals concerned, whose *views*, however *intended* to be marked by truth, will commonly take the form of selfish, or prejudiced feeling, and will be insensibly biassed by a thousand emotions which are hostile to the judgment of simple truth. "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." Proverbs xviii. 17.

But farther, justice is a social or political virtue, which renders to every man his due, and which in the domestic sphere, or larger circle of government, distributes equally its awards. As a relative virtue, it moderates affectionate feeling, modifies it by that *principle* which forms its last appeal, and equally distributes rewards to the well intentioned, encouragement to the diffident, strength to the feeble and sincere; as well as punishment to the wicked, restraint to the impetuous, and admonition and guidance to the insincere. As an attribute of the executive government, it regards the equal supply of the wants of all, the uniform care of all interests, the preservation of the several links of which society is

composed, the nice adjustment of complicated claims, the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well, although the latter is scarcely to be met by adequate provisions of the civil magistrate. In all these cases, it is based on the one principle of *seeking the common weal:* in the *former*, or relative institution, it is stated of Abraham, that the Lord knew him, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment: and in the *latter*, whatever may be the form of civil government, it should have but one object, the happiness and the virtue of the people, so that it might be always said of the executive, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." Job xxix. 11—17. Thus, its simplicity, utility, and necessity, are the principal recommendations of relative and political justice: and its exercise will be required on every day, for

every day will produce some new act of violence and injustice.

There are they, who fancy that justice may be left to individual feeling, or to the opinions of private bodies, or to the decision of larger sections of society, or to the judgment of mankind in general; and who vainly think the parade of executive government altogether unnecessary, since they plead for their virtue, as if it existed already in the bosom of man, as defined by common sense, directed by moral principle, and governed by *conscience,* not intending by this term *reason enlightened by revelation,* and sanctioned by religion, but a kind of half judgment of right and wrong, according to some fancied standard of accommodating purity. But the grand source of error in all this reasoning, consists in a forgetfulness of the real state of man, and in assuming the untenable position, that he is perfectly innocent; that even here, happiness is within his own reach; that his bosom is not agitated by conflicting passions; that he has no tendency to evil; that wisdom and piety, sincerity and truth, benevolence and compassion alone actuate him; that he is free from the influence of temptation; that he has clean escaped from the power of ignorance and vice, duplicity and falsehood, envy and self-conceit; and that his heart is governed by motives the most disinterested; thus assuming an imaginary state of perfection for man, and avowing a *practical* disbelief of the scriptural account of his

really lost and ruined condition: and when once the casuist has lost sight of this, the great compass of his thoughts, he has abandoned the only guide of his ratiocination, and is lost in unsatisfactory conjecture. The simple, but melancholy truth is, that man cannot confide in his fellow-man; that he is taught by experience to be suspicious of his motives and conduct; and that the apparatus of justice is interposed as a barrier to his vicious and anti-social conduct, under the influence of selfish passions, exhibited in the form of despotic power on the one hand, where a sufficient quantity can be accumulated in the hands of one, or of a few individuals; or of licentious freedom on the other, where the lawless will of the many is placed in the room of that single unlimited sway, which has been just noticed. The *natural* tendency of both these forms of power, is towards injustice, towards a sacrifice of the interests of many, and especially of the feeble, for the gratification of the few, and particularly for the aggrandizement of the strong. But justice interposes; and since it is perfectly *equal* in its decisions, it admits of no claims of pre-eminence of the great over the little: all is *equal*, and the views and feelings of the highest personage, demand, or at least *obtain*, no greater attention, than those of the peasant. Memorable instances of the truth of this position, are to be found in our own code of laws, and in the mode of their upright and independent administration.

In spite of the perversion of human opinion,

and feeling, and judgment, some traces will yet be found in man, descriptive of his high original, some feeble glimmerings, which still faintly indicate what he once *was*, and what he might *have been*. So in the present instance, a sense of justice may be found inherent in the human mind, although so lamentably distorted and obscured; aye, even its vestiges are to be marked in the retributive visitations of savage life, which though influenced by passion, and stimulated by the love of revenge, do yet *proceed upon the assumption* of appeasing the angry spirits of their relatives and friends, by visiting the injustice done to others, through the medium of calamities of an equally, or more fearful nature. So again, with regard to the power of conscience, which though defined by the *amount* of moral principle in action, and by the influence of religious motive, does yet always to a certain extent, approve the just, and condemn the unjust. But though there may be a foundation for this virtue, it is confessedly *feeble*, and becomes the immediate object of education to develop, to strengthen, to inform, to enforce, and practically to apply; and this is to be accomplished by moral and religious instruction.

The principles of justice and morality are alike; and moral duty is uniform in its character; since it flows from one source only, viz. *the revelation* of the will of God which he has vouchsafed to man. Thus justice is founded on immutable truth; and it is implanted in the human heart in the form of

an authentic communication from the Most High God to his feeble erring creatures; it is the offspring of infinite mind, is applied by infinite wisdom, and leads to infinite good. Thus it is perfectly independent of the varying opinions of man, and of all the nicer distinctions of philosophical morality; it is the judgment of God, not the caprice or prejudice of man; it is the law of heaven, and not simply the institutions of reason; it is not the result of opinion, since it rests in religion, in that counterpart of infinite mind, which existed anterior to the formation of all possible opinion; it is the indestructible attribute of Jehovah, and is to be found in man only as it may have been vouchsafed to him: although frequently clothed in language, it is altogether independent of words; it requires no logical support, and cannot be enforced by argument, for it is the science of duty, and consists in a prompt feeling of right, and in obedient action, not in reasoning and discussion, speculation and hypothesis. Justice is to the social compact what medicine is to the body; it should remove every uneasiness, repress every excessive action, stimulate every languid function, restore and preserve the balance of the several organs of which the body is composed, sustain its wasting energies, husband its resources, and secure, as far as possible, all the highest perfection of healthy action. So the object of justice is to cure and to correct the disorders to which the will of man is prone; to obviate the effects of injury, to repress vice, to

encourage virtue, to restore and to preserve the influence of religious principle, to support the feeble with its all-important sanctions, views and hopes, to be niggard of displaying its resources except upon the substantial ground of benevolent action, and to continue increasing in truth and righteousness, in good-will to man and conformity to God. Man is blind to his real interests; he goes on frowardly in the way of his own heart; he is infatuated by his senses; deaf to the admonitions of conscience; torn by conflicting emotions; driven hither and thither by passion; agitated by ardent desires, and by extravagant and unjustifiable pretensions; arrogant in his designs; presumptuous in his wishes; avaricious in his schemes for futurity; ambitious in his views; the prey of malevolent intention; enslaved by his fears; inhuman and ferocious in the exercise of courage; enfeebled by envy; stimulated by jealousy and suspicion; deceitful and vain; and the design of justice is to remedy these evils: with these views, also, it is to be educated, and to form a daily and hourly principle of the young mind's conduct. And while it is inculcated in action, it must also be exhibited towards them, and kept up as an uniform and last appeal in all their little differences, and is never to be commuted for any inferior consideration; "*fiat Justitia, ruat Cœlum.*"

Section VIII. *On Ridicule.*

Ridicule can seldom if *ever* be employed, without giving pain to the individual who is its object, and it is not often engaged on the side of real, valuable truth; since this possesses so many solid claims to attention, and is entitled to support on such substantial grounds, that it requires not the aid of this weapon for its support. It is much more frequently retained against all that is just in sentiment, or valuable in feeling, or excellent in conduct; for by the assistance of wit, that may be rendered ridiculous, or at least may be made to appear such, against which there is no other practicable mode of attack; a sarcasm may be accepted instead of an argument; a grotesque, or awkward exhibition of truth, may serve to render it unpalatable; an extreme display of feeling, the exhibition of the most feeble reasoning, an excessive severity of conduct upon the merest trifles, may serve to discredit genuine tenderness of conscience, or the influence of correct principle and real circumspection—all valuable qualities, which cannot be otherwise impugned. But so it is, that man cannot bear to be laughed at; and that he who has risen above the frowns of his companions, and has been proof against the temptation of their smiles, and has satisfactorily refuted their sophisms, and has shewn himself superior to the coldness of their neglect, and has steadily held

on his way in spite of every obstacle, and notwithstanding the persecution of his compeers, will yet yield his fairest convictions, his present peace, and future hopes, to the feeble but envenomed shaft of ridicule.

Ridicule takes its origin in the pride and malignity of man; it is the assumption of fancied superiority by one who dares to affix absurdity to the thoughts or conduct of another; and it is the offspring of that malevolence which is pleased with making others feel a real or fancied inferiority, heightened by the display of an assumed pre-eminence in an authoritative manner; a measure well calculated not only for effect, but for painful effect. It is then the result of that cruel pleasure which we experience at the knowledge of any thing which may derogate from the character, or bring disgrace upon our equals. Thus therefore it is the weapon of the feeble and the vicious, used against the strong and the virtuous; it is a dernier resort of the vanquished in argument, or the ashamed in feeling, or the convinced in duty; of those who can no longer stand up against the force of reasoning, and against whose conduct and feeling, marching in the simple majesty of truth and virtue, is a perpetual reproach. So true is this general rule, that ridicule is found attached to the very lowest scale of mental manifestation: the weak may laugh, though they cannot reason; aye, even the idiot, and the miserable victim of Alpine disease, are capable of evincing the sneer of ridicule; and these too, it may be

remarked, are proverbially mischievous and *malicious.* Malice indeed is the usual parent of ridicule, and this alone should shew its nefarious tendency. There may, however, be some follies which are not to be met by serious argument, but which ridicule may reach; the occasions for its exercise must, notwithstanding, be very rare; and when it is employed, it can only be admissible where the design is good, and the motive simply benevolent. Love to God, and that which is good; and love to man, and compassion for his wanderings can alone render it safe to employ this weapon even for the subversion of folly. That it *may* be thus applied, we have the highest authority for asserting, for "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." Psalm ii. 4. "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Proverbs i. 26. But who is sufficient for these things? Who can possess that infinite love, that fulness of benevolence, which is necessary before he can feel the influence of ridicule, without entertaining some kind of malevolent emotion?

There are several forms in which we meet with this vice, and which especially require the jealous attention of the Christian instructor. The first of these is satire, a species of literary composition, whose utility may be more than questioned, and the general effect of which is to excite the recoil of angry feeling in the bosom of those for whom it is intended; while it gives cur-

rency to folly, and invests it with a form, and reality, and tangibility, which it did not before possess; it is talked of by thousands who were not previously aware of its existence: *many* are stimulated to imitation, and it may well be doubted if *any* are dissociated by it from their pursuits; while all writers and readers—they who ridicule, and they who are ridiculed, and a host of servile and paltry imitators on both sides are filled with angry and malignant passions; passions which alienate the heart from virtue, and lead it astray from the straight gate and narrow way which leadeth unto life. But a satirical disposition is frequently to be found afloat in society, and especially claims the attention of the parent. It is at all times unamiable; its grand design is ever to trace some little flaw in the character of others, by which they may be rendered ridiculous; and in the prosecution of this design, none are spared; the nearest connexions, the dearest friends, the most intimate companions—even relatives, the aged as well as the young, the dignified and the good, all are involved in the influence of this devouring principle, which spares none, but makes each in their turn the object of satirical allusion to others. Perhaps females, from the sprightliness of their wit, lively fancy and rapid association, are more liable to this failing than males, who are accustomed to think more deeply, and moreover are restrained by the usages of society from that freedom of speech which is allowed to the weaker sex. But neither are exempted from

its influence, and in *all* this agency is injurious. On the part of the satirist, it represses the growth of benevolent feeling; and it produces pain, want of confidence, suspicion, and angry feeling in those who are its object. A satirical disposition is therefore to be checked, and the formation of the habit most sedulously opposed.

So also with regard to the operation of comedy, in which there exists a greater shew of benevolence than in pure satire; since the one aims simply to raise a laugh, while the other wounds more deeply. Still it must be recollected, that the object of this laugh is generally some silly peculiarity of manner, or phraseology, or style of expression, which however absurd in itself, is usually associated with some properties of sterling value; and that the effect of laughing at the exterior form is almost always to detract from the value of the thing itself. While the garb with which truth is invested is held up as an object for ridicule, it commonly happens that no attention whatever is paid to its intrinsic worth, but that it is involved in one undistinguishing conclusion of disesteem. It is a favourite weapon with the enemies of religion; they rejoice to seize upon some peculiarity of its votaries, and to hold it up to ridicule, because they know full well, that by so doing they diminish the operation of the truth itself. Besides, it is generally some *ultra* display of folly, against which the shaft of *comedy* is pointed, and each votary of this folly remains confirmed in his pursuits, because the

barb of ridicule does not touch him; it goes beyond him, and he looks around for some other enthusiastic individual to whom it may be more appropriate. The natural tendency of the human mind is to contract its aberrations to the smallest possible ideal space; and therefore it feels quite secure, when it perceives these follies to be expanded over a surface which it is conscious of not wholly occupying.

Another form of ridicule is what is commonly termed *a joke;* that is, sporting with the feelings of others, raising their hopes or fears, filling them with extravagant anticipations of good or evil, employing them upon some silly errand, or procuring in various ways, the pang of disappointment, and all this, merely for the purpose of raising a laugh, and enjoying the joke. But this is no joke to those who suffer, whose feelings are wounded, and who at all events are made to look and to feel *little;* a painful state, which none can endure with equanimity, and which none can reflect upon with complacency, for a fellow-creature has been pained, however slight the degree; and "even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." Proverbs xiv. 13.

Wit, or the lively association of two very dissimilar objects, in order to raise a laugh, is another most dangerous possession. It is the attribute of lively fancy, and depends on a great degree of rapidity in seizing the tangible points of an argument or an action, and grouping them into such fanciful combinations, as shall dazzle by their bril-

liance, and amuse by their singularity. Still it must be recollected that an essential property of wit as it is found in the world, is that it "may *cut* as well as *shine;*" and if it cut, it must wound; and if it wilfully wound, it does injury to *itself*, by destroying the fineness of its moral perception, and to *its neighbour*, by wandering from that active love to man, which forms a prominent basis for the Christian character, and one of *those fruits*, wanting which there can be no obedience to Christ, consequently no faith in him, and therefore no true religion. Far be it from us to discourage the lively sallies of fancy provided they be innocent; but in order to be innocent, they must be benevolent, and if they have not charity, they are worse than nothing.

Among the same class of mental attributes may be mentioned raillery, which is also admissible, if it be *pure*, but which can rarely be indulged without giving pain, and which must, therefore, be most sparingly employed; since intellectual brilliance *must* yield to christian virtue.

And lastly, another dangerous license of the same principle is the *repartee*, the *equivocal rejoinder* which is commonly made to some sally of wit, to some taunt of ridicule, to some point of raillery, and occasionally to some serious admonition. There are individuals, who possess this faculty, in a degree so pre-eminent, that it requires great energy and perseverance, to pass over the daily opportunities which present themselves for its exercise, and to subdue the inclination towards a

sneer. There are very few circumstances in which it can be considered as entitled to toleration; and generally speaking, it will be found the prelude to angry contention, and to every feeling which the Christian and the philanthropist should seek to discourage; it paves the way for lengthened disputes, terminating commonly in accusation, angry feeling, and the loss of christian love.

Humour is a low species of vulgar wit, which is only just noticed because it is too glaringly offensive and disagreeable to require detail, or to enforce the necessity for its opposition. In all these instances, it will be seen that the tendency of ridicule is to make an enemy of the individual laughed at, because he is rendered uncomfortable by signalising his weak side; and to minister to the pride and vanity of the individual, by ostentatiously claiming exemption from these defects, and invidiously placing *our* strength in pointed contrast with *their* feebleness; and thus shewing our want of benevolent feeling, the absence of which, though it may be sometimes only a negative state, will certainly produce a principle of hostility, on the part of those who are ridiculed. In the exercise of this *moquerie*, however, it is seldom that the mental manifestations will be found in a state of negation; there is commonly, not only the want of benevolence, but the existence of selfishness, and the decided absence of charity; and if so, the corresponding passions will only be more surely developed.

For the full effect of ridicule, it is not necessary

that the intended impression should be clothed in words; it may be expressed indeed by marked silence, by manner only, by the form of the countenance, by a simple inflection of the tones of the voice, sometimes by an unmeaning epithet which acquires point from the mode of its application; and it may be produced by feigning absurd consequences, which by no means naturally belong to the premises; or by the employment of doubtful phraseology, which will admit a disparaging explanation. The wound is only more effectually given by the hand of the midnight assassin, who strikes unseen, and deliberately attacks his victim in the most vital part, when unsuspicious of danger, and incapable of repelling the attack. Thus then, the operation of this mental state can scarcely ever be beneficial; for the *good man* compassionates the errors, grieves over the follies, and weeps and trembles at the vices of others; the *bad alone*, the weak and the wicked *can laugh* at that which is evil, and which occasions misery in some form or other; the tear of pity and the sigh of repentance, are an acceptable offering to a compassionate Saviour; but the raised lip of ridicule, and the selfish agitation of the bosom which is involved in the comparative disesteem of others, are not emotions which we would wish to cherish while repeating the daily petition to be preserved from temptation, or when employing the comprehensive confession of our church, or when drawing towards the close of our earthly existence, we begin to realize the cer-

tainty of future judgment, where every atom of conduct towards our fellow man, will be estimated as if actually done to Christ himself. It is at this serious hour of reflection on the past, that we shall feel how unworthy of a powerful mind has been devotedness to this vice; it is then we shall perceive the fearful inroads it has made upon the dignity of virtuous action, and upon the respect to which *it alone* can entitle us; it is then we shall fully know its fatal agency in annihilating the sacred and commanding influence of morality upon the life, in leading us to forget the great law of christian ethics, and of doing to others as we would they should do unto us; it is then alone we shall fully and fearfully own its desecrating operation upon the deepest and most serious recesses of the heart, and perceive how extensively it has stifled the voice of religion, blunted the feelings of charity, obscured the perception of right, destroyed the sympathy of affection, and blighted the fruits of the christian temper. It must be confessed, however, that ridicule does often result from mere ignorance and carelessness: the individuals who thus offend, laugh at and deride circumstances, and feelings, and doctrines, which they cannot comprehend; a failing which perhaps may be palliated by its *folly;* and yet it is a poor excuse to alledge, that the empty and the senseless may laugh at their own deficiency.

There is yet one form of ridicule, which has been purposely reserved for detached notice in this place, viz. *irony*. This, in common with

every manifestation of the principle from it which it arises, is a dangerous weapon, especially when used in common conversation. It is *then* next to impossible to divest it of odious personality, and therefore an ironical tendency should always be discouraged in the young. When it *can be* employed without personal allusion, upon serious subjects, and with a decidedly good intention, it may perhaps sometimes make an impression upon a mind which has resisted argument, and has been deaf to reasoning, and has remained proof against every common appeal; there may be cases in which its striking and sententious dicta may find access to the heart, and effect a lodgment there from which it will not be readily detached, and which may arrest the attention, and be the first link in the chain of conviction. Thus perhaps the folly of idolatry was never more conspicuously shewn in words than in the language of Elijah, to the prophets of Baal, when they called on his name, but there was no voice nor a n that answered, " cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked;" (1 Kings xviii. 27.) or in the memorable expostulation of the evangelical prophet— " He planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn, for he will take thereof and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god and worshippeth it, he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth

part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire. And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god." Isaiah xliv. 14—17.

Section IX. *On Intemperance.*

Intemperance consists in the enjoyment of some one or more of the good things of this present life in an inordinate degree; a degree which engrosses the thoughts and attention, or disorders the functions of the body; a degree which constitutes immediate pleasure the great object of existence, and before which reason and religion too generally shrink away, their voice stifled, their dictates unheeded and unheard. It is of great importance therefore, very early in childhood, to instil the principle, and educate the habit, that we *eat and drink to live.* Not perhaps that the infantile excesses are of themselves very important, but if they lead to the indulgence of eating or drinking for the sake of the gratification they afford, not for the satisfaction of hunger primarily, a principle of evil has been implanted in the youthful bosom, which will by and by, be exhibited in the most disgraceful forms of intemperance, should

the opportunity be afforded, and if the individual be not restrained by Divine Grace.

This care, this thoughtfulness about the supply of the wants of the table is derogatory from the dignity of human nature, and degrading to the character of rational man, the child of instruction, the creature of intellect, the pupil of reflection, the servant of conscience, yet the free agent; since it involves in a greater or less degree, the loss of reason, the profligate waste of time, the abuse of talent, the destruction of reflection, the stifling of conscience, the slavery of sin; the individual rests embruted, and has no higher hopes and desires than the beasts which perish. "Be not thou amongst wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh. For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." Proverbs xxiii. 20, 21. The scenes of misery and debauchery to which intemperance will lead, cannot be better pourtrayed than by the words of Solomon: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that

lieth on the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it again." Proverbs xxiii. 29—35.

"Obsta principiis," is the important lesson of wisdom, and it is never more exemplified than in the subject before us; if the enormous appetite of infancy be indulged, it will very generally terminate in the intemperance of the adult, and in the miserable and often premature decrepitude of the aged. Not one of the least effects of gourmandise, is the excitement of a degree of irritation of the stomach, which may be borne to a certain extent without producing morbid symptoms, but which *then* gives rise to a variety of sensations usually termed nervous; these serving to embitter existence: and *then* farewell to happiness; farewell to the real pleasure arising from the moderate satisfaction of healthy appetite; farewell to bodily comfort, to peace of mind, to intellectual energy, and to literary pursuit; for the curse of unprofitableness rests upon the memory; the clouds of distress hover over reflection on the past; farewell to firmness of purpose and evenness of temper, and welcome all the glooms of hypochondriasis, and all the fancies of the valetudinarian; farewell to the pleasing anticipations of hope, and welcome the darkest forebodings of despair; farewell to usefulness, to principle, to character, and welcome all the infirmities of the feeble and the helpless; farewell to the tranquil-

lity of an evening fireside, and the peaceful consolations of sleep, and welcome all the fretful irritability of the miserable victim of habit and disease.

But we must follow this character farther: exhausted nature can scarcely endure these sufferings without a struggle to relieve them; and with the spell of infatuation upon her resources, she flies for assistance to more powerful stimulants, and seeks to obviate the *secondary* morbid effects, produced by *primary* irritation of the stomach, through the instrumentality of wine, or some other alcoholic fluid, opium, or tobacco. All these may be classed together, and what is the result? The immediate relief of those sensations, and the substitution of pleasurable feelings, upon which such is the attendant charm, that the wretched victims of inebriety remain spell-bound by its influence; and if ever a momentary doubt of the propriety of their conduct *should* cross their mind, it is only a motive for a renewed or increased dose of their *apparently* kind friend, but in reality their most *deadly foe.*

We must justify these sweeping assertions: let it be recollected then that the practice is *invariably a growing evil;* the stimulation of to-day will be required to be augmented this day month, for the purpose of producing equal comfort, and so onward in a constantly increasing ratio, till enormous quantities are demanded; till apoplexy and palsy in all their frightful forms invade the patient; and till death close the scene; or till by one sus-

tained and magnanimous effort, the victims of this painful habit rid themselves of the miserable chains which have been forged around them; and once more emancipated from the most cruel bondage, they regain the full possession of their unrestrained and unincumbered faculties. The effect upon the brain, of this pernicious practice, is perhaps the most frightful. For, as we have seen delineated in the admirable description of the wise man, the first effect of all these narcotics is to produce fulness of the vessels of that viscus; but upon the subsidence of this preternatural distension, they do not at once regain their original tone and contraction; hence arises a degree of nervous irritability, which is a fresh motive for another dose of morbid happiness; a similar process is repeated in larger quantities, and at less distant intervals; the patient is never comfortable but when under this unnatural state of excitement; the brain suffers from constant irritation; a kind of heavy stupor supervenes upon the short brightening of the faculties, which is the immediate effect of every renewed dose; and if this be worn off before another supply be taken, it is succeeded by unconquerable restlessness, a peevish, captious irritability of temper, and a variety of miserable feelings, which are only superseded by fresh libations, and renewed irritation of this most valuable organ, which cannot, however, always be subjected with impunity to such reiterated excitement, but sooner or later has its integrity impaired; and then a frightful train of morbid actions

invades the patient, and subjects him to a listless inaptitude for all exertion, to the diminution of his muscular power, the wasting of his animal frame, to loss of appetite, to disturbed and dreaming slumbers, to disposition to drowsiness during the day, to giddiness, head-ache, faintings, depression of spirits; and to that fearful hour, which will surely come, when a dreadful retribution of immediate suffering, will be the consequence; when the powers of the constitution will be irretrievably lost, and when the wretched invalid will become a burden to himself, and his attendants, with this aggravating consideration, that his sorrows are the result of a habit of intemperance, thoughtlessly acquired perhaps, but pertinaciously pursued; and this period may arrive suddenly, aye, instantaneously, and perhaps at this very hour!

Miserable too, is the mental state of these unhappy sufferers, never knowing peace and happiness, except when under the influence of artificial excitement; convinced of their error, yet without sufficient energy to abandon it; always subjected to irritability of temper, which invests every object around them, with the gloom of dissatisfaction; unfitted for the enjoyment of life; gradually enfeebled and destroyed by the slow, yet certain operation of this destructive poison; a prey to unavailing regret from reflection on the past, yet the remorseless victim of the power of habit; advancing on the future, with the cheerless prospect of a useless and miserable old age;

assailed by loathsome disease; and yet death almost seeming to be too tardy in putting a period to their sufferings. And if this be a just view of the ultimate consequences of a habit of intemperance, how important is it, that the vice should be checked in earliest infancy; aye, more, that it should not be *encouraged* in the nursery, by goading the appetite, and stimulating the stomach, and loading it to repletion; how all-important, that the principles and the habit of temperance *should be daily and hourly watched and developed.*

The great *art of living*, consists in abstemiousness, since by this means, the sense of taste will be preserved in a natural and susceptible state; it will always be in a certain relation with the wants of hunger, and the desire of appetite; the stomach will require no stimulants to coax it into good digestion; it will be found the willing servant of the animal economy, though the rebellious slave of vitiated inclination; the tone of the general system will be maintained, and it will be apt for all the corporeal functions of its situation in life; and the individual will possess a clear head, and a light heart, capable of intellectual pursuits with energy, and freed from the vapours of ennui, and the dark clouds of melancholy: the temper will not be soured by the irritation of an oppressed stomach; and fits of the spleen, and all the fancies of hypochondriasis will be known only as matters of curiosity, or rather of superstition, like the genii, and the

fairies, and the spirits, and the bogles, with which our ancestors of romantic memory have peopled every glen, and mountain pass, and have amused the strong, and affrighted the feeble with tales of their good or bad offices. Let it be recollected, that *happiness* does not consist in *complete* satisfaction, but that on the contrary, it is destroyed by it. Moderate enjoyment adds to comfort; but the extinction of desire results from excess, which also palls the sense of pleasure; so true it is, that a natural curse attaches itself to luxurious indulgence. Again, the attempt at complete satisfaction is not only inseparably connected with satiety, but occasions an irritable state of the senses, in consequence of which their impressions are perverted; that which was intended as an instrument of enjoyment becomes the source of misery; and dissatisfaction, and disgust, are in close alliance with the entire extinction of want.

But this is not all; not only are the functions of the body disturbed, by rendering it wholly subservient to the inclinations of depraved appetite; not only is its comfort subverted, its means of enjoyment opposed, and its taste rendered morbid; not only are appetite, hunger, and good digestion unknown, and supplanted by the miserable feelings of the pampered slave of sense; not only are the physical strength, and health, and vigour impaired, and the intellectual manifestations stunted in their growth, or blighted in their maturity; not only is the man subjected to

disease, and vain and unreal fears; not only is his stomach converted into a great culinary laboratory, and his mind into that of the irritable menial who presides over its preparations and disguises; but his heart is rendered impassive, and inaccessible; he is alive only to selfish emotion; the accents of woe break upon his ear without sympathy; the tear of sorrow, the language of compassion, fail to awaken his sensibilities; the business of charity is not *his* business; *his* all important engagements are the arduous pursuits of gastric satisfaction; and though every individual around him may perish, he is deaf to the solicitations of benevolence, if its boon *may* be obtained *only by a sacrifice* of the stimulation of his palate, and by a loss of the enjoyment attached to the gradual exhaustion of his stomach, the feebleness of his intellect, the decay of his senses, appetites, and passions, the subservience of his will to animal desire, the premature decrepitude of his mind, and the monstrous perversion of the qualities of his heart!

The grand object of good education then, will be the limitation of the animal desires, and the *creation* of *few wants;* the indulgence of moderate wishes, and the temperate gratification of appetite. This object is to be accomplished by simplicity of diet, by taking care that it should be sparing in quantity; by producing thankfulness for *whatever* may be provided, by teaching children to take all that is set before them, without curious inquiry into its properties; by avoid-

ing the creation of artificial wants and desires; by the cultivation of moderate wishes; and by teaching them to provide for the necessities of others, out of some little privations of their own: so shall they pass through life usefully and happily; so shall *they live while they live,* and *eat and drink,* not because to-morrow may put an end to the capacity of eating and drinking, but because to-morrow will call them to give an account of all that they have said, or done, or thought; *and may all find mercy in that day!*

Section X. *On Honour, or the love of Reputation.*

The love of distinction, the desire of being handed down to posterity with honour, the wish to be lifted out of the little narrow sphere we now occupy, and to be placed in relation with the universe—to exist in every quarter of the globe, to be spoken of, and to be had in reputation by distant ages and nations, by those who know us not, except from the attributes of our character; to transmit a name to unknown people, and scarcely descried futurity, not only unsullied by the taint of vice, but honourable for the exertion of virtue, distinguished for talent, living in the pleased recollection of others, and being remembered with regret, and yet with delight, and

held up as an example for the imitation of the young and the unstable; such are some of the privileges man desires and seeks after; such are the palm promised to the productions of genius, and the consistency of virtue.

This principle may be useful as a stimulus to activity; but is insufficient and injurious, should it ever become *a motive* to action. We may desire the approbation of the good, and we may earnestly pursue that path of duty which will ensure it; but if we constitute this the basis of our conduct, and place it in the room of a simple desire to do the will of God, then we substitute an inferior, an unworthy, an antichristian motive, for the principle of faith, and of obedience which arises from it; for our trust and confidence are in men; it is to them we desire to be pleasing; it is their praise we seek, and their approbation we pursue; we rest satisfied with that which is only valuable in proportion as it is consistent with religion, and coincident with the approbation of the Most High! It is this alone which can give value to the praise of man; for if it be at variance with the truths of religion, and if it do not directly lead to God, it is the offspring of Satan, and is intended to deceive us, to tempt our hearts aside from the pursuit of heaven, and to fill them with the profitless advantages of the kingdoms of this world, and "the glory of them."

Man wishes to *appear great,* and pursues with ardour that renown, which results from the un-

conscious consent of his contemporaries, and of his posterity. To be had in honour is the great object of his wishes; and for the most part, he rests satisfied with the meed of approbation of his fellows. But his great desire should be, *to be good*, to obtain the favour of God, and to ask for the praise of man, only as it may be attached to those exertions of the mind, or those qualities of the heart, which may have been consecrated, by the influence of divine grace, to the service of God, and the good of man. If this limit were not placed to the desire of reputation we should soon learn to sacrifice principle for momentary eclat; that which would be pleasing to those around us, would be our standard of truth, our highest aim; and in order to secure this, we should accommodate *our* views to theirs, and lower *our* estimate of motive and conduct, to the maxims and agency of others, rather than elevate it towards the pure and holy model which has been proposed for our imitation.

The love of honour is developed in early life; it is manifested in the desire to excel of the schoolboy; it is exhibited in the conduct and productions of maturity; it exists even in extreme old age, and on the very confines of the grave; it blossoms in childhood, ripens in the middle period of life, and is preserved with the greater care, even as the links of connexion with existence, are daily fewer, and as the opportunities for the acquisition of fair fame, must of necessity be lessened, and perhaps almost reduced

to nought. It is one of the most desirable goods of life, if fixed upon a proper basis, the basis of truth; it is of more value than riches; and it is better to bequeath it to immediate posterity, than the most splendid legacy of ill-gotten wealth. If it be pursued with due limitations, it is useful as a constant memento to rectitude of conduct; it affords a staff upon which to lean in the feebleness of declining years; in the near prospect of dissolution; and in the deepening twilight of infirmity, leading onward to the extinction of life, and the long night of the grave, it will be consolatory to hope that being dead we may yet speak; that the testimony we may have borne in favour of the truth, shall be seen after many days; that the consistency of our conduct, will prove a light to others; that our opinions may serve as a guide to posterity; that our example will be useful to those who come after; and that they may follow us, even as we have followed and imitated Christ.

The award of honour or reputation, is, or at least should be given to every kind of pre-eminence; whether it be to the mere exterior of pleasing manner; or to considerable literary acquisition; or to every conquest of reason over passion; or to the discoveries of genius, the researches of industry, or the performance of virtuous action in difficult circumstances; to the consistent discharge of relative duties, or the unwearied pursuits of private charity; as well as to public and more diffusive benevolence, ope-

rating not so much upon the individual and his immediate connexions, as upon the happiness of others; it is also conceded frequently to success, rightly, when that success is merited, and is the result of peculiar good qualities, but erroneously, where it is the mere consequence of possessing a greater share of effrontery than a more talented competitor.

Since this reputation is founded upon opinion; and since that opinion is often erroneous from being formed on a wrong basis, and variable, according to the ever changing caprices of fortune and circumstance, and folly and fashion, so is it often unjust; it is offered to prejudice, and withheld from virtue; it is given to softness of manner, and refused to real benevolence; it is yielded to those who make an ostentatious display of religious feeling, or conduct, and denied to the humble, retiring Christian; it is ascribed to the semblance of piety, the spirit of party, to the narrow-minded bigot, and the ultra-sectarian defender of particular and exclusive doctrines, while it is refused to the temper of vital Christianity, the spirit of christian love, the charity of the Bible, the catholic principle which would embrace in one family, *all* who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, whatever may have been their several peculiarities of opinion.

Reputation is often yielded to the shewy individual of conversational powers, or to the superficial review-reader, who appropriates only for

effect; and is more sparingly doled out to the retiring, and perhaps taciturn colossus of literature; it is abundantly given to such as talk of their feelings, and most cautiously withheld from those who reason; it is afforded to those who have impertinence enough to push themselves into notice, while it is practically denied to modest merit. In all these, and in numberless other instances, it is fallacious in its decisions: be it then the parent's aim to instruct the young as to what should be the proper objects of honour, as well as to prepare them for suffering the injustice of a misjudging and prejudiced world.

When reputation has been obtained, it does not always add to our happiness, since it places its possessor in a situation of trial and temptation; and it requires the greatest caution on his part to be preserved from a selfish, vain-glorious, and conceited spirit, as well as from pride and vanity, and a brood of hideous and injurious passions. It is difficult to preserve fresh in the recollection, that whatever we possess is not our own, that it is the gift of God, and that we have nothing which we did not derive from him, and for which we ought not to be humbly thankful; and yet this conviction alone can preserve us, when the world shall speak well of us. When it does so, it generally over-acts its part, and extols the little good we may possess; so that if we believe its assertions, we shall be quite lost in the high opinion we shall form of the value of our own character. Let us take heed, lest we fall.

We must not omit in this place some mention of the laws of honour, that mistaken code which does not take for its basis the laws of the most high God, but is a direct violation of them, and which seeks to repair a wounded reputation by inflicting a physical wound upon the calumniator; or in other words, which seeks to substitute the deep criminality of murder, for the trifling aspersion contained in the heated expression of an unguarded moment. And such is the duellist; he aims to conceal the imputation of some venial and unfounded flaw, by the deep and indelible moral stain of revenge, carried on to its last savage consummation in the destruction of life!!

Another cause why reputation does not always, or indeed often add to our happiness, is, that it is generally obtained, not without some collision with the world, and is often awarded, in the midst of dangers from avowed friends and secret foes, in spite of many contrarieties of opinion, and not without much violence done to the private feeling of others; a violence which almost always causes our well merited renown to be closely attended by the blast of envy, and the whisper of detraction; causes enough surely to produce unhappiness in the midst of success, and to make us feel, that if the cup of this world's blessing be filled with honour, it is yet a draught of primeval bitterness, and possesses nothing which is satisfactory; it is the first impression of the deadliest poison, (arsenic,) sweet to the taste, but very quickly destructive to all the energies of life. In

such circumstances, the *glory* of Christianity, is all that is worthy of being sought after; even the confession of unworthiness; the striving after obedience to the law of God, and conformity to the image of his Son; the anxiety after our future happiness; the desire to make our calling and election sure; the constant pursuit of those secrets of futurity, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive; the anxious wish to obtain a foretaste of immortality, of that tranquil, peaceful state, in which the competition of intellect, the jarring of passions, the jostling of interests, the collision of feeling, the errors of opinion, the fallacies of judgment, the injustice of man, shall all be exchanged for the one delightful employment of vying with each other to praise *Him* most, who has saved us from evil, washed us in his blood, and presented us without spot, before the throne of God.

CHAP. XVII.

ON THE PROCESS OF MENTAL INSTRUCTION.

The process of mental instruction has been already so fully considered in the preceding chapters, that to return to it in the present, must appear like marching over the same ground, and must be in fact, a recapitulation of similar truths. And be it so: we can seldom travel through the same country, without descrying beauties, which had before escaped our notice; and identical truths need to be repeated again and again, in order to revive their slumbering impression, and to place them perhaps in a novel point of view, or at all events, to recall their pristine form, and strength, and depth of colouring. Thus, for instance, *here*, as well as in moulding the temper, and educating habits, it is necessary to consult the original bias of the mental manifestations. Want of attention to this principle, is a frequent source of failure in the process of instruction; because its cares have been lavished upon a perverse and *bizarre* pursuit, even that of training the productions of mind, and forcing the young idea into a direction uncongenial to that bias, and

frequently incompatible with it. Hence the formation of distorted characters; of those whose fruits are immature, or which bear no fruit at all; of those whose attention is distracted by every new object, without being commanded into a steady train of thought; whose perceptions are quick, but often prejudiced and erroneous; whose memory is so treacherous, that the perception of their impressions not being sufficiently attended to, they are almost immediately forgotten, or recollected only as the frusta of thought, broken and disjointed images of disconnected ruins: hence also, the origin of those who reason little or incorrectly; who associate wildly; who reflect not at all; whose imagination is too fantastic to admit of controul; whose judgment is fallacious; whose acts, and whose opinions of those acts, and whose conscience of good and evil are perpetually at variance; whose will is acted upon by a thousand caprices; and whose faculty of imitation resembles rather the mimicry of the monkey, than the rational acquisition of good from the study of good models.

It is impossible to educate by a charm, or a nostrum, or by an undeviating system; the individual mind must be studied, and a system for each must be evolved. That indeed is the worst kind of empiricism, which would apply the same remedies to support health, and to cure disease, under every possible variety of circumstance and situation, in every change of climate, and in every

constitution, however dissimilar. A mode of treatment, beneficial in a few instances, would, if universally applied, become injurious to the majority, and absolutely destructive to very many. There is no such thing in education as that which is indifferent; that which is not useful must be mischievous; that which does not minister to the increase of strength, must impair it; that which does not contribute to the mental growth, takes away from its vigour; that which does not act as a medicine, will prove a poison; and even the former, however well intended, may be converted into the latter by injudicious, or ill-timed administration.

Education is not omnipotent; it cannot supersede the conformation which nature has impressed; and its powers extend no farther than to educe, modify, regulate and apply the faculties she may have conferred. If nature have cast the character into a certain mould, of which it may have received the impression; and if education, with the idle expectation of finding it still soft and plastic, and susceptible of any other formation, according to the will of the instructor, should seek to produce this change, and to divert the mental shoots into another direction, it will assuredly find that the former will be perpetually endeavouring to assert its power, and to regain its original character; and that that which might have been well-defined, and strongly marked, and vigorously pronounced, and prominent, energetic and valuable, if suffered to develop itself accord-

ing to nature's formula, will become distorted, confused, jumbled together without order or arrangement, and will be rendered an object of pity, for its manifold inconsistencies and weaknesses. So may the tree to which nature has given the law of its growth in an upward direction, be bent according to the will of the gardener: but to no purpose; nature will constantly display her resources, and exhibit her power of contravening art, by throwing out fresh shoots, which invariably continue to seek their original destination, and to maintain inviolate the character first impressed upon it; the beauty and usefulness of the plant may be destroyed, but not the immediate agency, and ultimate tendency of its growth. So also the attempt to alter the primitive form of the character will be useless and mischievous: it cannot be accomplished; much time will be lost in the trial, and the temper will be irrecoverably injured, while a degree of irritability will be called forth, which will form a serious hindrance to the only rational means of counteracting that which is injurious, viz. to give prominence, and activity, and importance to other faculties best calculated to supersede and keep under the restlessness of morbid idiosyncracy.

This observation only shews that the primitive form of the character must be consulted, in order to determine advantageously on the means necessary to successful instruction: but although education and cultivation cannot set aside the designs of nature, yet it is equally demonstrable that the

two are mutual re-agents; and that the influence of natural character cannot entirely defeat the purposes of education, when judiciously unfolded, temperately yet firmly persisted in, and rationally applied. The conclusion is, that nature and education ought never to be at variance; but that the one should always coincide with, and assist the other, in order that they may be rendered mutually effective. Nature's impress should be seized by the hand of education, and should be so modelled and governed as to become an instrument of usefulness. The attempt to counteract her intentions may indeed be fruitless; but it is of infinite importance to watch the development of those designs, and to infuse into them a living character of substantial worth; so that the original bias which might otherwise countervail and frustrate our wishes, may be converted into an engine of forwarding our fairest hopes.

Thus, where nature may have given a too fervid imagination, it is impossible to destroy its influence; but if education will stoop to employ it, even *this* may be found the means of fixing the attention to all that is valuable, and worthy of pursuit. There *may* exist a feeble and sickly manifestation of mental attributes; yet such may be rendered useful; not by directing the mind immediately to objects which require great exertion of thought, but by making this very feebleness, and the consciousness of its existence, the instrument of its own cure. Thus the sensitive, fervid, and imaginative character may be taught

not to waste its vigour on ideal phantoms, but to direct its energies to objects of importance: the reasoning and reflecting, the cold and persevering, may be gradually led to a greater display of feeling, under the influence of the principles it has imbibed, and the culture these may have received: the feeble may be taught to aspire by degrees; conscious of their own inadequacy, they may become really humble, and from the influence of this humility may acquire an indelible value. Thus the seeds of genuine character will be developed; and when the soil shall have been prepared by judicious management, and chastened by exposure to the genial rains and dews of knowledge, to the rays of brightening science, and above all to the light of Christianity, and the beams of religion and virtue, *the* true light from whose reflection alone it is that any object can appear lucid; the natural richness and fertility of the soil will have been increased, and it will have become capable of bearing other fruits, and maturing other principles, which if attempted to have been implanted at first, must necessarily have perished. Gradual *amelioration*, not rapid *conversion*, is the principle; the latter, in the intellectual world, is chimerical, the former is practicable.

Another principle which will be found useful to the instructor, is the unwearied attempt to convert to her *own use* all which may appear unpromising or unpleasing. As yet, the mind is free from the impression of false or erroneous princi-

ples, so that it is not so much against these we are called upon to combat, but against the influence of natural temper and disposition, against the agency of passion, against the operation of *early* prejudice, and against every peculiar bias resulting from these several states. Above all, let the christian parent be careful to secure the prejudices of her offspring on her own side; for prejudice is not error, but the action of a principle, which forms a judgment before it is fully capable of understanding and appreciating all the circumstances which influence its observation. Education should be particularly operative in the impression of a certain number of these prejudices. There may be something abhorrent in the idea of *prejudice*, in consequence of the general employment of the term; but there is really nothing in the thing itself which should excite our aversion, or prevent its frequent application to the process of mental instruction. Even a belief in the doctrines of Revelation must be accounted a prejudice, although it be one of the highest moment, and greatest advantage; for we believe (and *act* on that belief) what we cannot fully comprehend. Hence prejudice should be secured on the side of truth; and this tendency of the human mind should be rendered available for the purpose of implanting principles which will exert a beneficial, a moral, a religious influence; which shall exclude the prejudices of sophistry and error, and practical scepticism; prejudices which result from

the *absence* of knowledge, instead of being made *the means of conveying important* information.

The exercise of the passions also may be rendered useful; and it is of the greatest importance to engage these powerful auxiliaries on the side of instruction, since they can render it both agreeable and easy, partly from their direct influence, but more especially from the conversion of their excessive, or uncontrouled, or distorted tendency, towards the side of truth and virtue. It is particularly with this view that the lurking agency of evil emotion should be most scrupulously detected, in order that whatever is offensive or injurious; whatever is calculated to retard the intellectual manifestations; whatever is baneful to the growth of talent; whatever detracts from the influence of moral action, and religious motive, and scriptural principle, should be converted in favour of the views of education. Much may be effected with this view, by giving a certain degree of consequence to that which it is wished to destroy, or at the least to diminish its power; by appearing to foster and encourage it, but really by so employing it as to subject it to the secret, constant, uniform operation of such counter-agents; and then its nature and tendency will be gradually and completely, though silently and unobtrusively altered; and the disposition which is unpromising may be rendered capable of maturing the most valuable fruits.

Genius.

It is necessary in this place to consider the degree of attention which should be paid to what is usually termed *genius;* a something, which when deprived of the air of mysticism which has been thrown around it, and when reduced to its real weight, and legitimate properties, may be defined to consist in a peculiar aptitude for the reception of particular ideas; a quickness of perception, as applied to specific objects; a fervour of intellect, which catches at a glance the impression intended to be conveyed by certain ideas; and which almost anticipates the pains bestowed on its cultivation. This form of predisposition, resolvable after all into a certain unknown condition of the brainular organ, which allows it to be more readily excited by some stimuli than by others, is by no means uncommon, or extraordinary, and is no more remarkable than the peculiarities which attend individuals with respect to the excitement of their senses agreeably or disagreeably, by particular objects of taste, by peculiar odours, by the distinctive characters of sound, by varying pencils of light, or by the different qualities of tangible bodies. Wherever it exists, however, it requires great *care;* since there is danger lest genius should rest satisfied with superficial acquirement; lest, acquainted with its power of *appropriation,* it should cease to employ that power from very indolence; and lest it should finally rest satisfied with the exercise of

its peculiar forte, instead of aiming to compass the greatest possible extension to the domain of mind; lest it should be contented with the exertion of qualities which possess more splendor than worth, more brilliance than depth, more polish than weight, more tinsel than precious metal.

Far then from anxiously wishing for the display of genius, the parent will observe its active stirrings with anxiety and solicitude; since it often argues a preternatural *irritability* of the mental system, in consequence of which, it may be easily aroused into *excessive action* by common causes; causes which should only operate as a usual, and simple, and natural incentive to the understanding and the judgment; while again, in the sensitive child of genius, perception is so vivid, and the imagination frequently so restless, that there is great danger lest the excitement should become morbid, and should lead to feverish, rather than to healthy action. In this case, there would often be a great want of solidity, and stability of character; there may be found, the dazzling polish of wit and vivacity; but the more sober faculties of reason, reflection, and judgment will be in danger of existing most sadly *minus*. The possessor of great original powers is to be noticed with fear, lest the mind should become superficially acquainted with much, but learn nothing thoroughly; for the beneficial influence of education is commonly felt, as its different parts are combined, and wrought into an integral system, individually calculated, for the possessions and

the wants of each. In the child of great parts, the mind is often not sufficiently retentive of its knowledge, to be enabled to combine it; hence the effusions of natural genius should be restrained or directed; they should be employed in the pursuit of objects, which require slow and patient investigation; the mind should be early trained to diligence, unfatigued perseverance, unremitting labour: to order and precision in the performance of its duties; to regularity in the distribution, and economy in the management and expenditure of its time: and then the possession of this peculiar aptitude may be made the means of much good, and should serve as a beacon to point the way in which the talents may be most beneficially employed.

Parents often admire this *brilliant* gift, whereas if left to its natural influence, it is essentially a *misfortune*, a dangerous pre-eminence; giving extensive views, but liable to the grossest perversion; its excursive flights will be restrained with difficulty; and it will greatly increase the labour of education, while its possessor, except under extreme caution, will generally make a far less valuable character, than one who with half the natural talent, is obliged to exert that power in the acquisition of substantial stores of mind. It may be established as a principle, that knowledge easily acquired seldom lasts long; for in the first place, that which is obtained without difficulty and labour, is not often valued; and when the effort

of pursuit is slight, the enjoyment of possession is transient; the impression made by both is superficial in its effect, and transitory in its duration; it is blown away by some new object of desire; change, and fickleness, and the love of sensation, form the principal attributes of mind; and to this morbid appetite for stimulation, the wholesome desire for plain food is sacrificed.

This natural tendency is sometimes augmented by the injudicious conduct of parents, who will not only admire that aptitude to learn, which leaves the child destitute of exertion, industry, energy, and solidity; but who will also, in the plenitude of their vanity, make a parade of this talent, even in the very ears of the party concerned, whom they will hold up, as possessing abilities capable of carrying the world before it, and will soon render vain, and self-confident, and silly, and disagreeable; while the event will prove, that the (perhaps) neglected, the timid, retiring, modest, but persevering character will be more highly respected, more valuable, and happier, than the idle and conceited, though infinitely more talented child of genius.

The excessive action of *genius* is usually combined with a deficiency of power to maintain it; and therefore the indications for the parent, are to *suppress action, and to support or infuse power*. Thus for instance, the extreme vividness of perception is to be restrained, while the faculty of attention is to be developed; the susceptibility to impres-

sion should be blunted, while the memory should be strengthened; feeling should be regulated, while the influence of reason is augmented; the mere power of acquisition should be discouraged, while the habit of reflection should be fostered; the eager desire after sensation should give place to the sobriety of thought; the waywardness of uncontrouled desire must yield to the dictates of principle and conscience; the imagination must be preserved within due bounds, while a preponderance should be given to the just laws of defined imitation. A similar rule is applicable to the attributes of the moral, as to the qualities of the intellectual being. Mistake or mis-management may be fatal to both; for the ever-varying impulse of evanescent impression will produce only a momentary excitement of intellect, and will finally terminate in the ignis fatuus, the brilliant meteor, which has only served to deceive the unwary, in the gloom of grossest ignorance, making darkness still more dark, by the preceding coruscation.

Again, this possession endangers the moral welfare, since it leads for ever to the verge of the magic circle of temptation; and at all events, proves a snare to the young, and to those whose principles are not fully formed. For, independently of the thousand occasions in society, which attract the youth of brilliant parts, from the narrow path of rectitude, there is one most serious evil; viz. supposing the most favourable case,

that the attainments of genius are solid, and its resources great; still its possession paves the way for a too high estimation of human knowledge; and this idea once excited, becomes a prejudice against other kinds of information, operates as a veil upon the mind, renders its perceptions confused and undefined, introduces doubt, exalts its own powers of thought, and thus leads on to a disparagement of revelation, and to the wily labyrinths of scepticism, terminating in the endless mazes of infidelity, that highest, last, and greatest effort,—that most perfect example of the most astonishing credulity; a credulity which believes the most monstrous propositions, rather than submit the pride of intellect to be taught of God. Far then from giving the child, who is a possessor of great genius, an idea, that this gift is the indication of a superior understanding, convince it, that you dread the possession; that it is dangerous in the extreme; that it indicates rather deficiency, than the fulness of mental manifestation, rather feebleness than strength: teach it to be modest and distrustful; fearful of its peculiar tendencies, and diffident in the display of its resources: instruct it into the necessity of becoming ingenuous, and instil into its mind this principle, that if the persevering industry of the humble be added to the possession of powerful talent, it *may* then by proper management, arrive at a degree of excellence and information, which mere quickness of perception can never hope to attain.

It must also be remarked in this place, that wherever there exists this facility of acquisition, care is required, that the attention should not be called to a multiplicity of objects in rapid succession; or it will become distracted with variety, and never gain a complete acquaintance with any: it should not then be *divided*, but *concentrated*, especially at first. Thus, the division of time, into a *great number* of very minute portions, each occupied by separate and dissimilar engagements, prevents entirely the full effect of every *one;* and thus with all the bustling activity of constant occupation, much time is virtually lost; a habit of earnest trifling is produced,—the *strenua inertia* of busy nothingness; and undisturbed attention to subjects of primary importance is rendered impossible. Another evil of no secondary importance, arising from the fitfulness of incessantly altered pursuit, is, that by it, the mind may be led to seek amusement in a variety of ever-changing duties; and so passing through life in a whirl of perpetual motion, to leave *no time* for the study of the heart, and the future eternal relations of the immaterial spirit: "serious things to-morrow," as cried the wretched voluptuary, within an hour of his assassination, to the messenger who brought him the intelligence of the conspiracy formed against his life: "serious things to-morrow," practically exclaims the thoughtless child of incessant occupation; "I have *no time now* to attend to you," and that perhaps within an hour of being

called to his last audit. This idea *may be* fanciful: but assuredly, much of the moral constitution, may be traced to the remote influence of some physical or intellectual cause; a cause, for the influence of which notwithstanding, we are every way accountable as free agents; and which perhaps *itself* forms an ingredient in that system of probation, which is the defined characteristic of our temporary situation in this world.

To conclude, the parent must be careful, that the *imagination* be early subdued under the power of reason, and the influence of religion. This faculty may be *deficient;* but it is more frequently *redundant*. In the former case, it may be gently and cautiously stimulated by some of the purest works of fiction, by the study of our best poets, and by the perusal of the most unexceptionable dramatic pieces. But its effects are principally to be feared in the *latter* instance: a little tameness of fancy; a little want of sprightly association, may exist without injury to the individual; but the exuberant imagination requires to be carefully disciplined. Religion is its only truest guide; this forms a perfect safeguard from its erratic influence; and under its protection, it may become the source of much happiness to its possessor, and of usefulness to those with whom he stands associated. Here however it is still subjected to *reason;* for religion enjoins nothing, asks nothing, possesses nothing, which is not in strict conformity with reason, though we may not

be able fully to comprehend all its bearings and relations: and if its influence should ever be superseded, the mind is left to wander without a guide, in the fairy wilds, the ideal images of enthusiasm, the baseless creations of ungoverned fancy.

The agency of imagination over taste, and thought, and feeling, and action, must never be lost sight of, or left to itself, lest an erroneous tendency should be imbibed, and serious evils should follow in its train. Nor must it ever be forgotten, that a superficial method of instruction will greatly promote luxuriance of fancy, and will even almost give it a degree of prurience; while it will be repressed by all those plans which are more solid and stable. The sketchy pursuit of knowledge, together with light reading, will much more readily occasion a corresponding effect upon the imagination, than will be the consequence of patient study on the judgment; and that because the imagination is more easily acted upon, and the feelings are more powerful agents than mere reason and reflection; and thus, both the one and the other, are liable to become active, long before the understanding can be opened, or the judgment developed.

Finally, if the efforts of imagination be not guarded by the sobered results of instruction, and founded on the solid basis of judgment, and built up on the imperishable superstructure of religion, it will be worthless and vapid, in proportion as it

is artificial and premature; in proportion as it is attracted by the light and airy nothings of the day, and as it floats through the atmosphere of life, placed far above the simple realities of the world, and infinitely farther below the pure and holy regions of the blest; that middle state, which renders the individual unfit for a residence on this nether world, and ever keeps him from truly aspiring after the unseen joys of futurity!

CHAP. XVIII.

ON REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

A SYSTEM of reward for good conduct, and of punishment for its converse, forms an essential part of the maternal police. Futile and inefficient indeed is the domestic economy in which *reward* is the only feature, and in which the exclusive form of *punishment* is the *absence of reward.* Equally absurd is that system of government, which consists in a series of graduated punishments for impropriety; and in which there exists no peculiar reward for opposite conduct, but the only mark of approbation is the negation of punishment. It is indeed true, that the civil magistrate is only the dispenser of *justice* to the innocent, and of *punishment* to the guilty, in so far as the comfort, and property, and life, or reputation dearer than life, of the *former* have been invaded by any overt act of the latter; and that his power does not directly extend so far as to reward the persevering in virtuous action; but the analogy by no means holds perfectly in the supposed cases, since the object of the civil magistrate is *only action,* however the *quality of that action* may be modified by *circumstances* or by *motives,* which

palliate its magnitude on the one hand, or increase its enormity on the other: while, on the contrary, the object of peculiar interest to the parent, is not so much the *action itself*, as its *secret springs*, the various conflicting emotions and passions of the infant bosom; and the peculiar design with which action has been contemplated.

And again, with regard to the civil magistrate, it is *presumed* that virtue *will meet* with a sufficiency of reward; and that although it may be neglected *here*, it will by and by be abundantly recompensed. But in early infancy, although long after the period of discipline should have commenced, the parent does not possess the means of referring to this futurity of reward, as an encouragement to rectitude of action; and if she did, there are those who would deny the propriety of employing this principle as an incentive to virtue; and if in the more favourable supposition, the understanding of the child should be sufficiently developed for this purpose, is there not a manifest inconsistency in directing its feeble glance beyond the grave, in affirming that *you* are looking forward to this place of rest, and peace, and happiness, where you will be able to praise and adore, and love God, with undivided, and with pure affection, and yet that you would not bestow the meed of approbation on that *which is good*, in so far as it is humbly designed *in obedience to* his will? Is there not a palpable incongruity, in asserting that *you* are travelling towards heaven, and yet that you do not admire, and esteem,

and love (should you meet them on your road) any of its productions, notwithstanding their growth may have been stunted or their beauty impaired, by their association with matter, and by their residence on this earth, which is not their native clime: but this *testimony of approbation, this admiration and esteem, if they exist,* are in fact, of the peculiar nature of a recompense; for they form a certain valuable consideration, attached to certain modes of conduct, and as such *are,* in plain *unsophisticated language, rewards.*

Since, however, there are some excellent, though we think mistaken parents, who object altogether to the system of rewards, and even to the slightest testimony of approbation, *as in the employment of the term good,* it will be necessary to consider this subject more at large. And we shall do so, first, by shewing that a system of rewards is *founded in nature,* and therefore results from those laws by which the Supreme Governor of the universe has directed *the course of nature:* and next, that it is expressly sanctioned by religion.

With regard to this stumbling-stone, this unfortunate term *good;* it is confessed on all hands, that man is corrupt, that there is none that doeth good, that he is inclined only to evil continually; and yet there is a sense in which the term *good* is applicable even to the imperfect actions of this sinful, helpless creature. For God is pleased to accept, and graciously condescends to be honoured by, those who with the light of the knowledge of

his will, and in dependence upon the assistance of the Spirit of Grace, and with a sincere desire of living to his glory, do *earnestly strive* with pure hearts, to keep his commandments, and to preserve the narrow way of eternal life. But a wise and holy God, cannot *be pleased to accept,* cannot be *honoured* by that which is not *good;* therefore that which he *does* accept, and by which he *is* honoured, must *be good;* and his creatures need not be afraid of employing the term in this sense. If there be nothing good, there is nothing for the Christian to aspire after; there can be no *growth* in grace, no *increasing conformity* to the will of God, no *ripening* for heaven; this world is not a period of probation, in which there is a choice of good and evil; and the essential distinction between the righteous and the wicked, is reduced to that which is ideal and unsubstantial, while it is dissociated from the obedience of faith, and disconnected with the fruits of righteousness, the *first,* the *last,* the *only evidence* of the distinguishing love of God to the Christian.

I. To return from this digression, a system of rewards is founded in nature, and therefore may be clearly traced in the agency of Providence.

1. Nothing can be more clear than that our future interest is dependent upon our present conduct; an axiom, to the truth of which, the testimony of the experience of all mankind uniformly leads. The man of pleasure, the man of business, and the literary character, all know that success in their respective pursuits is only to be

obtained by energy and diligence, and that it is *a reward* of industry and perseverance. It is true, that there are circumstances connected with the moral government of God over his creatures, and with our situation in the world, as a scene of difficulty and trial, which do sometimes defeat the best concerted plans of success, though most industriously pursued: but as a general rule, the law of nature is, that success attends the diligent, or in other words, that it is the *reward of virtue.*

2. In the present state, pleasure and pain are the consequences of our own actions; they are greatly in our own power, because we foresee the results; reason calls our attention, and reflection dictates, and conscience admonishes, and the influence of good example is before us; and all combined promise real good, as the reward of obedience: while *pain* as necessarily haunts the footsteps of those who will not attend to the voice of truth, who will not be governed by reason, who proudly abjure the influence of reflection, who are deaf to the monitions of conscience, who sullenly refuse to imitate the good, whose stubborn wills yield not to revelation, but who go on in the frowardness of their own hearts, who listen to the suggestions of passion, and are unmindful of the still small voice of truth. And yet, accordingly as men act reasonably or unreasonably, virtuously or viciously, there will ever be on the one hand, the reward arising from a consciousness of doing the will of God, and of fulfilling the great end of our existence here, the pleasure of reflecting on the improve-

ment of time, the glow of benevolence, the confidence of hope, the delight of sharing the esteem of others, the sympathy of friends, the approbation of the good and sincere, and the admiration of the just; while, on the other hand, there must be placed the punishment accruing from the conviction of selfishness, the indulgence of angry, avaricious, or ambitious passions, the fear of discovery, the ghosts of mispent hours, the envy of competitors, the neglect of friends, the disesteem of the good, and the isolation of feeling, arising from a *voluntary* separation from those who seek to do well, and from the *involuntary* secession from our support of all whose prejudices, views, and interests, interfere with our pursuits; there is then, in the laws of action, a system, whatever that may be, of reward to the good, and of punishment to the wicked.

3. So also, with regard to many of our blessings, as for instance, the *preservation of life*. This is mainly in our own power; the days of our years are all known to Omniscience; but it is through the medium of our individual agency, they are either shortened or prolonged; by prudence, by care, by temperance, we procure health and escape disease; by medicines we are raised again from the bed of sickness; while by want of prudence, by consulting appetite only, by following the guidance of passion, and listening to the temptations of desire, and yielding to intemperance, the firmest health is thrown away, the strongest constitution is ruined, and premature

old age, and early dissolution are the consequence, although perhaps the *tardy* consequence, resting only at the close of a long series of decrepitude, the failure of intellect, and the second childhood of mental manifestations. Here, health and enjoyment, are the *award* of temperance; disease, decrepitude, the burden of self-existence, and the exhausted patience of relatives, the punishment of the opposite vice. There is nothing good to be obtained without exertion; and in all cases prudence and temerity, industry and carelessness, meet with appropriate results.

4. On passing in review the character and conduct of man, we shall find that a certain degree of enjoyment is attached to specific actions, and a corresponding portion of suffering to others. Thus, the pleasure arising from the subjugation of the passions, and the remorse resulting from the indulgence of selfish desire; the comfort of forbearance, and the real misery of anger; the pleasure of forgiveness, and the cruelty of revenge; the delights of benevolence, and the fears of avarice; the peace of the humble, the irritability of gratified, and the remorse of disappointed ambition; the happiness of the liberal and the charitable, and the wretchedness of the churlish, the inhospitable, and the penurious; the cheerfulness of active duty, and the burden of indolence, and the pains aud penalties of ennui; the confidence of sincerity, and the suspicion of falsehood; the emptiness of vanity, and the perpetual dissatisfaction of pride; the weight

of modesty, and the equanimity of patience and meekness; the clear head, the cool judgment, the intellectual energy, the corporeal health of the temperate, and the muddy conceptions, disordered fancy, erroneous judgment, painful reflection, mental feebleness, and feverish irritability of the intemperate; the common admiration of gratitude, and the universal detestation of the ungrateful; are all instances in proof, that there is in the constitution of nature, a system of divine approbation or punishment; or in other words, that God annexes delight to some actions, and uneasiness to others; with the apparent design to induce us so to act, as to ensure the reward of the one, and escape the punishment attached to the other.

5. But in the constitution of nature, we observe farther traces of the same principle. Man constantly acts, with the view of *avoiding evil*, or *of obtaining good;* the fear of the former, and the desire of the latter, alternately agitate his bosom with suspense or hope; and attract him towards the right employment of principle on the one hand, and the avoidance of passion on the other. It is true, that he often selects the evil, and refuses the good; he makes an erroneous judgment, or deliberately prefers that which is wrong; but this is only a proof of that *disturbing change*, which has so fearfully operated to mar the designs of the Creator, and to give the preponderance to vice. It is also true, that there are exceptions to the pleasures and satisfactions

of virtue; the forgiveness of injuries is not always followed by gratitude; sincerity and veracity may not be duly appreciated; the good are not always justly esteemed; envy, calumny, and detraction, sometimes await even the firm, the consistent, the ingenuous, the mild and the benevolent; ridicule is often heaped upon the over-much Christian: but these again, are clearly deviations from natural consequences, and proofs of the miserable agency of some perverting cause; of that sin, which, but for the astonishing love of God, and the infinite sacrifice of Christ, would have left this world a blank, aye, more than a blank, the wretched abode of those unhappy spirits whose chief delight consists in cursing God.

6. Again, the great Governor of the universe, is not a God of simple absolute *benevolence;* he is *just* as well as *good;* and as such, he not only rewards the good, but apportions the measure of his approbation to the conduct of his creatures. Thus, health of body, tranquillity of mind, the satisfaction arising from the wish to do right, the comfortable reflection on the past, and a variety of external advantages, are the consequence of careful, prudent management, and are apportioned to the degree, in which that prudence has been exerted; they are within our reach; they form a stimulus to action; and as we obey that stimulus, in whole, in part, or not at all, do we obtain, or lose the reward with which it stands associated. This natural course of things, in the

conduct of the supreme Governor of the universe, may always be traced in the effects of his government, although it may be carried on by the instrumentality of man; and although his stubborn heart, and sinful propensities do often interfere with its full and uninterrupted completion. Yet we do not thence infer, because virtue is cast into the shade, and vice is triumphant, that the author of nature is indifferent to the peculiar properties of these; far from it; the very success of iniquity is commonly the first link in the chain of the most fearful punishment; and the obloquy poured upon the righteous, is very frequently a portion of that trial which will make them more completely confiding in God, more active in obedience to him; consequently, more fitted for the enjoyment of the sure reward of divine approbation.

7. Once more, the different effect of virtue and vice upon the mental manifestations, is another proof of this system of rewards. Except where the voice of conscience has been stifled, we shall find, as the consequence of virtuous action, a peace of mind, a calm of the soul, an evenness of temper, an aptitude for intellectual pursuit, a clear memory, a power of just selection, and regular association, and the will subjected to the other powers of the mind; while on the contrary, man is vexed with himself for his deviations from rectitude, he becomes peevish and irritable; and regret for his folly, is added to his other painful feelings; he sullenly broods

over the past, and *if* reflection do not lead him to repentance, *remorse* completes the catalogue of his miseries; his temper is soured; he retains not the power of commanding his attention; his perceptions are indistinct, his memory treacherous, and his powers of judgment so obtuse, that he stands a monument, of the natural punishment inflicted upon vice, and of the reward offered to virtue.

II. A system of rewards, is expressly sanctioned by revealed religion; its traces are to be found in considering the constitution of nature; but its full manifestation, is only to be distinctly characterized in revelation.

Here, we shall find a free and unmerited recompense afforded to the righteous, by the goodness, bounty, and mercy of God, by which he is willing to accept our imperfect, though sincere services, a consequence which has been promised to all obedient and true believers; for "their Father which seeth in secret, shall reward them openly." Matthew vi. 6. It is indeed true, that this is entirely a reward of *grace;* man has no *claim* to it; and it is attached, not to the performance of the act, but to the spirit in which it is accomplished; it is withheld from the sad countenance of the hypocrite, but is liberally given to those who appear not unto men to fast, but unto their heavenly Father. And shall not the christian parent imitate this fundamental law of the providence of God, and reward her obedient children, not as an act of right, but of

favour; not as the payment of a claim for duty performed, but as an incentive to a higher reach of integrity, to a more intense striving after that which is good.

But reward is intimately associated with keeping the commands of the Most High; "for in keeping of them there is great reward." Psalm xix. 11. "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest." Luke vi. 35. Again, reward is promised to the righteous; "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;" (Psalm xcvii. 11.) for "verily, there is a reward for the righteous. The wicked worketh a deceitful work; but to him that soweth righteousness, shall be a sure reward." Proverbs xi. 18. This reward is also of a distinguishing nature; "for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer." Psalm xxxi. 23. Well "knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord." Ephesians vi. 8. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm lxxxiv. 11. Even the smallest acts of charity, when done from christian motives, are included in this system of rewards; for "whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no

wise lose his reward." Matthew x. 42. Once more, the presence of the Lord is promised to the just and upright, to those who deal courageously in his cause, for " the Lord shall be with the good." 2 Chronicles xix. 11. Again, there is a reward for the righteous in the approbation of conscience ; " for our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our *conversation* in the world." 2 Corinthians i. 12. But the Christian is referred to a still higher tribunal than the judgment of conscience ; " when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind : and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee ; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke xiv. 14. " Evil pursueth sinners ; but to the righteous, good shall be repaid." Proverbs xiii. 21. And lastly, " *withhold not good* from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." Proverbs iii. 27. " For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently ; but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." 1 Peter ii. 19, 20.

If then the traces of a system of rewards be to be found in nature ; if success attend the diligent ; if happiness be in a great measure the

result of virtuous action; if peace of mind be dependent upon the just employment of its powers, and the subjection of its passions; if our blessings be often placed within our own grasp, though promised, and given only to sincere exertion; if there be a present satisfaction attached to the Christian employment of mental emotions and desires, and to the active exercise of social, relative, and christian virtue; if there be, in the opinion of man, a preference of that which is just, and upright, and sincere; if man, however erroneous his judgment, however perverted by sin, do yet strive to preserve that which he esteems good, and seeks to avoid that which he deems evil; if the justice of the moral Governor of the Universe may be traced in the measure of his approbation, though shewn by the instrumentality of his creatures; if the effect of virtuous action be to maintain the integrity of the intellectual manifestations, to augment their power, and increase their susceptibility; if a system of rewards be clearly sanctioned by the Christian Revelation; if recompense be promised to those who keep the commandments of God; if rewards be attached to the righteous, and if these be proportioned to the degree of uprightness, and the sincerity of the heart; if the Great God will withhold no good thing from those who seek, and love, and serve *him;* if *he* be not even unmindful of a cup of cold water given to a disciple; if *he* have promised *his* presence and blessing to the good; if *he* have given them the testimony of their own

conscience; if amongst the injustice of man, and the doubts and fears arising from the frailties and imperfections of the best Christians, *he* teach his children to look forward for an adjustment of this disturbance of the order of his moral government, to the resurrection of the just; if good be directed to be repaid, and not to be withheld from the righteous, or from them to whom it is due; if patience under calumny be thankworthy, and acceptable to God; and if the converse of all these propositions be undeniably true, how is it possible that the christian parent can with any propriety banish rewards from her system of discipline; how is it possible that she can be so led away by the sophistication of over-refinement, as to lose this important stimulus to good action?

The parent, then, should be actively sensible to merit, and should neither be slow, nor sparing in bestowing the marks of her approbation: moreover, she should be equally alive to the presence of an active disposition to do right, *wanting* the occasion for its exercise, as to the *act itself*, and perhaps even more so; for the *former* will remain as a principle of action, while the *latter* may be only a transient state, and may pass away with the circumstance which gave it birth. For this purpose the design of conduct should be narrowly watched, and that which proceeds from good disposition should be carefully nurtured, especially when it leads to any action which is contrary to the *natural* bias of the human heart. When correct conduct proceeds from a principle of obe-

dience to parents, (although it may originate in the prejudice of receiving upon trust the propriety of such action, in consequence of a belief that the judgment of the parent is superior) it should be suitably fostered and encouraged, and praised, and if need be, rewarded in any other proper manner. In this, as in other cases, it will be necessary to keep in view the distinction between the *action itself*, and the *motive* whence it proceeds: for a little consideration will shew, that the appearance of obedience, however in itself good, may proceed from wrong motives: even a child is capable of deception, (mournful testimony to the untaught depravity of human nature,) and its actions may be framed with the view of obtaining the praise of the parent, a reward which it is conscious of not deserving; and while at the same time if its conduct could be abstracted from *her* knowledge, it would be entirely and willingly forgetful of the principle of obedience; it would act according to the frowardness of its own heart, and would become the sport of its passions, and perverse inclinations.

This state must be checked with a firm and persevering propriety; since it is not a useless parade of ostensible conformity to the parental will, but the silent, unobtrusive, modest performance of its requests, and acquiescence with its desires, which constitute pure and genuine obedience; it is not the hollow compliance of *one* who exclaimed, "I go, Sir," and went not, but the humble sincerity of him "who repented and

went." If the child's *motive* be not attended to, reward may serve to *ruin*, instead of to *improve*, and to mould the character upon the best models.

Care must be taken that reward should only be justly given, and that it should not be equally and indiscriminately lavished on the deserving and the undeserving, or it will soon lose its effect; for if it do not lead to confounding the distinctions between virtue and vice, it will yet cease to be a stimulus to exertion, if it be equally attainable by the indolent and careless, as by the prudent and active. Parents often commit a mistake on this subject; anxious not to excite a feeling of disappointment in the bosom of their offspring; perhaps also dreading the self-denial necessary to withhold a promised boon; or fearful lest they may excite envy and jealousy in the mind of the unsuccessful, they are too frequently disposed to overlook the *want of desert;* and while they confer reward on the industrious, not to withhold it from the idle, in the *hope they will be better next time. A most ungrounded hope;* for indolence is natural to man; and if he can be filled with good without exertion, he will never strive after success. Besides, the feeling of disappointment *should be produced*, or how will the child reflect on its own voluntary loss? And neither envy nor jealousy will be excited, if it be clearly shewn that the one is rewarded for merit, and that the other suffers by an act of its own choice. If, however, this principle be not invariably acted

upon, but if, on the contrary, capricious deviations be made from it; then indeed there will be room for anger and jealousy, and envy and hatred; but this is the fault of the parent, and not of the system.

Again, the reward itself should consist of some little testimony of parental approbation, enough to gladden the heart of infancy, while at the same time it should not be any abiding, and prominent, or galling mark of distinction, which may by its obtrusive perpetuity excite the envy of others; and then the effect of reward is altogether lost, and *indolence* is supplanted by a baser passion. The object with children, should be to make an adequate impression upon their hearts, but not permanently to wound their feelings; to kindle the glow of exertion, but not to fan the flame of passion, or to feed the feverish irritability of vice.

Reward should also be *accessible* to all upon their industriously seeking it; it should not be promised so much to a certain degree of *success*, as to the *sincere effort* to obtain it; for the powers of children are so dissimilar, that their success would be a very unsafe criterion of their merit; since while emulation is a powerful incentive to action, envy is the bane of the young mind; and it must ever be recollected, that in the simple unprepared heart of the child, the *highest degree* of emulation (though in its nature perfectly distinct) is very nearly allied to the lowest grade of envy, and will be easily converted into that ma-

lignant passion by the consciousness of having been outstripped by a more *powerful* competitor, and of not reaping the reward which was really due to the intensity and sincerity of its exertion. And since it is necessary to keep the two principles perfectly distinct, and to avoid all that may excite envious feeling in that bosom which should be keenly alive to the impression of the mildest benevolence, the more trifling the reward is, the better, so that it be just sufficient to become an object of desire. This too will be right on another principle, viz. that in dispensing rewards, it will be necessary to separate immeasurably the ideas of action, and of a natural, consequent, and adequate recompense; since the child may erroneously connect them, and the expectation of this connexion may become a principle of action very difficult to eradicate, and embarrassing to the parent when attempting to lay the foundation of religious instruction. This is to be accomplished by not holding out to the young a *certain reward* as the necessary consequence of particular observances. When some valuable consideration of a defined nature may have been held up as the result *of*, and as a reward *for specific* actions, the *amount of effort* will be governed by this stimulus, and the two ideas will be inseparably linked together: but if action be first established on proper principles, then indeed it may be rewarded with advantage, and the idea of *merit* attached to it will be preserved entirely distinct; for there is none good but one, *that is God*. And lastly, the

mark of approbation should be conferred on conduct, not because it is pleasing to the parent, which is far too low a standard of right, but because the action is consistent with the commands of God; not because the parent is gratified, but the law of God obeyed; not because the feelings are interested, but the judgment approves; not because the passions are excited, but reason assents, and reflection confirms, and conscience dictates, and the word of God commands, and the Spirit of God reveals the truth, and teaches all things, and leads the sincere Christian in the narrow way, which conducts to eternal life.

CHAP. XIX.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—ON PUNISHMENT.

In apportioning punishment to misdemeanour and crime, it must be recollected that the child is not a mere domestic animal, to which the expression of displeasure may be conveyed by external signs; but the mind should be addressed, and the spirit softened, and the heart led to contrition, or very little will be gained towards realizing the object of all punishment, viz. reformation. Some expression of displeasure, some mark of dissatisfaction may be required, but much less frequently than is generally believed. In common, the child may be made really sorry for its fault by reasoning with it, and by explaining its nature and tendency, its offensiveness to God, its origin in disaffection to parental authority and legislation. This method of reasoning will *make* a *lasting* impression upon the mind, because principles of action will be incorporated with it; while another mode of direct punishment will perpetuate its influence only so long as the mark of disgrace caused by its infliction attaches to the character: and it should *not attach long*, or the subject of it learns to undervalue and despise

itself, from the low estimate it is compelled to form, in consequence of the brand of infamy adhering to its little newly-fledged flutter of reputation, and confining it to the ground; a state of mind most unfavourable to the future development, and even to the present well-being of the mental manifestations.

This subject has been already anticipated in the chapter on discipline; we shall therefore confine our present observations within very narrow limits. It may be necessary to recapitulate, that corporeal punishment can be scarcely ever necessary, if the child be properly managed from the beginning; and the majority of instances in which it becomes indispensable, may be traced to maternal neglect and indecision, and want of firmness; and it may well become a question, how far it can be consistent with justice, to visit these parental faults and follies on the children who have been injured by them: while if the little delinquents had been rationally treated; if their understandings and their hearts had been appealed to with uniformity of plan, and steadiness of execution; and if the object of punishment had been to produce repentance and reformation, the necessity for corporeal infliction would have almost invariably vanished.

An axiom in conducting this process, is, that the parent should be inflexibly rigid in not overlooking faults; while she should be always ready to forgive, especially in those instances of disobedience which may seem to involve *personal*

feeling, and excite *personal irritability*. It does not follow from this dictum, that it will be always necessary to treat every commission of a fault with the *same degree* of seriousness; but when observed, it should be invariably noticed, or there will be excited in the bosom of the young, the hope of escaping *detection first*, and the expectation that the parent may not be in the mood for noticing its errors; both evils of great consequence, inducing a state of mind, in which the chance of impunity, not the nature of the fault is considered; and in which, the evil of crime is augmented by the deeper obliquity of chicanery and intrigue.

Again, the anger of a parent should be kept perfectly distinct, from that feeling which prompts to the correction of faults; whatever she does in anger, will be badly done; "be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath;" let the emotions of anger have first subsided; and then the mind will be brought into a fit state for bearing the rod of justice; irritated feeling should have no influence on her conduct; her sole guide should be the Word of God; her only motives the command of God, and subdued affection for her child. These, and these alone, will inspire her with such constancy of design, such tenderness of affectionate reproof, that the youthful mind will be preserved easily susceptible of sorrow for its faults; and thus the design of punishment will be obtained; that design being not to render its subject *unhappy* but *better;* and

to excite contrition, that penitential sorrow, which worketh repentance; for "behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what *carefulness* it wrought in you, yea, what *clearing of yourselves*, yea, *what indignation*, yea, what *fear*, yea, what *vehement desire*, yea, what *zeal*, yea, what *revenge*." 2 Corinthians vii. 11. By the carefulness, the examination, the hatred and the fear of evil, the great desire to avoid it, the zeal of imitating good models, and the wish to be revenged upon former delinquencies by future good conduct, the child will be preserved from the influence of similar dangers. Until this *contrition* has been produced, it will be wrong to *forgive*, or the end of punishment will be defeated, and a most fatal obstinacy will be fostered; but when the desired effect *has* been produced, restoration to favour should be the consequence, lest the continuance of punishment and disgrace, should harden the heart, and alienate the affections, and induce a suspicion of the want of parental tenderness and compassion; a want of resemblance to *him* whose great work it is to forgive, to blot out transgression, and to remember it no more, when his children turn unto him and repent.

Again, the correction of a fault in one child, may be easily made a lesson to others, not by annexing to the former some open mark of disapprobation, which might point the finger of scorn, and probably excite exultation, and contempt on the one hand, and a malicious feeling

on the other; but by patient instruction, by opening the understanding to the nature of the wrong, and the ground of punishment; by shewing the influence of uncorrected error, and undisciplined passion, as far as it can be comprehended, and explaining the immediate act of impropriety: thus preparing a lesson of instruction for *all*, as well as of correction for the individual.

It has been said, that faults should be *ever* noticed; but this general rule requires a specific limitation; they should be noticed only when they are observed by the *parent*, not when related by one child of another. For besides the uncertainty of human, and selfish, and prejudiced, and impassioned testimony, which would render it impossible to detect the simplicity of truth; the practice itself should be most sedulously discouraged, and most carefully checked, whenever it occurs. A system of infantile espionage, will be destructive of family peace, and harmony, and comfort; and therefore, the mother must never *listen* to the relations of the tale-bearer; or at least, must not *appear to listen*, though she may avail herself of information thus conveyed, so far as to awaken her own attention, and quicken her observation in any particular direction; but she will always avail herself of the opportunities thus afforded, to enforce the duties of love, and forbearance, and mutual forgiveness, on that best of grounds, even our own need of forgiveness from man, of *pardon from God!*

Punishment should also be carefully guarded, from exciting the idea of its being a species of *expiation* for a fault. This is not its *object;* indeed it is impossible, for man can do nothing good to atone for evil; and it is to prevent this most erroneous opinion of practical Roman Catholicism that the attention must be directed; or the child will soon flatter itself into a belief, that the *evil* of its guilt, is washed away by the measure of its tears, or by the little privation to which it may be subjected as a punishment. This secret influence is really of great importance, since it is by the impression of trifles that great results are ultimately obtained.

Warmth of temper on the part of the parent must be very narrowly watched; for a hasty expression of irritability does not the slightest good, but on the contrary, excites an unfavourable recoil, which is peculiarly destructive to the good effect of reproof; while a permanent, and an influential bias may be given to the mind, by pursuing the plans above recommended.

Lastly, punishment of one fault, may frequently be made the vehicle of instruction, with regard to other circumstances and things; it may be constituted the foundation of general principles of conduct; it may be employed to warn of danger, to develop moral feeling; to arouse the springs of action and of judgment; to confirm the habits of sound thought, and just conduct; to enlarge the understanding; to fix the attention on the paths of the youthful feet; to

quicken their perception of impropriety, and of the moral tact of good and evil; to deepen their recollections of sin and suffering; to fix their minds on the reasonable grounds of this action, and to induce them to reflect upon it; to give an increased tenderness to conscience, and to subdue the will; *all* important objects, which should, if possible, be accomplished.

CHAP. XX.

ON SOCIETY.

It has been pronounced by Infinite Wisdom, that it is not good that man should be alone; true it is, that, such is the constitution of his nature, he cannot *live* alone. He may indeed exist; he may vegetate in seclusion; but for the full development of his mental manifestations, and physical powers; for the maturity of his reason, for the fruits of his intelligence, for the harvest of his affections, for the growth of his sentiments, for the enlargement of his views, and the correction of his opinions, he requires the aid of society.

In the retirement of the monastery, and in the seclusion of ascetic life, man may be selfish, ambitious, envious, malicious, enthusiastic, insincere, hypocritical, vain, idle, intemperate, irritable, and unjust; these *also may be* the attributes of his social character; but then, it *is only* in society, that he can become master of himself; that he can subdue his passions to principle, and govern them by religion; it is only in society, that he can command his anger, conquer selfishness, controul the risings of ambition, and

the temptations of avarice; it is only in society that he can subordinate his desire of revenge to the forgiveness of the Bible; that his hopes and fears can be duly exercised, and fixed on their proper objects; or that he can be stimulated to the due employment of talent, and the improvement of time; it is only as a social being that envy can be subdued and jealousy destroyed, and the principles of benevolence, esteem, love, pity, and admiration substituted in their room; it is only in society that his sincerity and love of truth can be tested, and that candour and ingenuousness can be developed; it is only thus that vanity can be successfully opposed, and modesty obtain its due weight and influence; it is only in society, that gratitude, and justice, and patience, meekness, and forbearance, can find the due field for their display, and the exercise necessary to preserve them from decay and disease: finally, it is only in society that man can undergo that discipline which will alone fit him for usefulness on earth, and prepare him for the happiness of futurity.

But this is not all; for it is in the contentions, and collision, and conflicting elements of society that the character is to be moulded, not to solitary independent action, but in conformity with its relation to others in the social compact, or the more intimate bonds of affection. The social passions must be regulated, and duly exercised, lest they be influenced by self-interest or selfish gratification on the one hand, or lest they should lead us into concessions which will render the boundary

line between right and wrong less strongly marked, less perfectly defined, less prominently characterized. The narrow-mindedness of prejudice and bigotry, the ultra-liberalism of those who reck not for principle, and only seek to please the dominant many, are equally to be avoided. It is most true, that the means of man's happiness are to be developed in society, and that pleasure unparticipated is but half enjoyed; but it is equally true, that the social affections, though the source of some of our purest, greatest pleasures, are dangerous to our real happiness, unless they be properly regulated and directed to their just objects, and subdued within the bounds of reason and religion, and subordinated to the hopes and fears, and present enjoyments, and future anticipations of Christianity. Hence, the object of maternal solicitude will be two fold; first, to expand their powers and cherish their growth, in the earliest stages of infancy: and then, to correct every improper bias, and so to watch over and direct their influence and exercise, that they shall assume their purest form, and exist in their most perfect state of health and strength. At a more advanced period of life, she will watch with jealousy and suspicion over the attractions of social feeling; she will carefully guard its indiscriminate exercise, and protect her offspring from that fondness for mere society, which may lead them into conformity with the views, and maxims, and opinions of the world!

It has been already shewn, that from the feeble-

ness and helplessness of solitary man, from his social wants and fears, from the necessity of preserving his possessions, and of resisting individual violence and oppression, have arisen political institutions, whose strength or feebleness, depend upon their conformity with the manners and habits of the people, and upon their capacity for securing to them the greatest measure of happiness and liberty, consistent with that individual surrender of selfish right, and individual feeling, emotion and passion, which is necessary to secure the ends of justice, and to preserve social order, and domestic peace. It has been remarked too, of how little avail, are the best digested political arrangements, unless they proceed upon the principle of moral and religious obligation; unless they involve a higher sanction than the wisdom of man, even in his collective capacity, can give; unless they assume the revealed will of the Most High as their basis; and unless they provide for the religious and moral necessity of the people.

Strange, aye passing strange, is it, that in a country, where these principles are so well understood, and so judiciously practised; that in Britain, that land of liberty, so free, that slavery cannot breathe her atmosphere, so characterized by her benevolent, and religious institutions, so ever ready to the calls of charity, so ever willing with pecuniary sacrifices in order to secure the happiness of the miserable, or the freedom of the oppressed; strange, that in Britain's empire, there should exist a nucleus of slavery; strange,

that the blood of our fellow-creatures should be an object of merchandize; strange, that any political considerations should uphold a system in which the unrecompensed toil of the many is employed for the aggrandizement of the few; strange, that there should be cherished in any corner of our empire, an unhallowed spot, where the sacred ties of marriage and relationship were disregarded, or where the voice of truth could not be heard, if it proceeded from the lip of one whose greatest fault consisted in the complexion of his skin, and whose blackest crimes were produced by the moral degradation occasioned, fostered, encouraged, and augmented, by the cruelty and injustice which first made him a slave, and then bade his mind remain in a state of bondage to sin and ignorance, even more cruel than the cruelties of the trader; but passing strange, that there should exist in Britain those who will turn a deaf ear to the voice of suffering humanity; or who will exhaust their tenderness on their signature to an anti-slavery petition, or on their subscription to an anti-slavery society, but who will not sacrifice the relish of their palates to the great interests of freedom and religion; who will not at one and the same time say to the unfortunate proprietor of slaves, "we will no longer consume the produce of their toil, and we are willing to give you our share of compensation for the loss you may sustain." Man is born to love, and to be loved; and the existence of slavery is a solecism against the constitution of society, and an

offence to the God of heaven, the God of the liberties of the Christian, the God of love! Let then parents set an example to their children, and bring them up in the love of principled freedom, and in the hatred of slavery; grateful for their own peculiar privileges, and anxious that *all* who live under our empire should participate its largest benefits, and should know the value of themselves, and of their property; live in the safety of their own castle, and feel that while "England expects every man to do his duty," her expectation is founded upon the principled basis of having herself done her duty by the remotest, and the poorest, and the weakest, and the most helpless, and the least gifted of her subjects.

To descend from the imposing magnitude of political institutions, to the privacy of the smaller *côterie*, in which the wants and jealousies, the hopes and fears of individuals are more peculiarly operative, we shall observe that many of the most valuable properties of man arise from his love *to*, and from the influence *of*, society. It is well known that great strength is always to be obtained in nature by the union and combination and co-operation of many little individual powers, trifling in themselves, but almost omnipotent when combined. It has been remarked, that even plants grow best in numbers, and there can be no question but that animals thrive better in society than when alone; it is an universal principle of nature's, from the influence of which, man is not only an exception, but is, on the contrary, remark-

able for the most striking elucidation of its influence.

Grievous indeed is it that this principle of union is so defaced by passion, that its existence may even almost well be questioned; and that it is so destroyed by ambition, that man meets his fellow man by hundreds of thousands, to conquer and to die, to dissociate himself from the great end of his life, to agitate the social compact to its centre, and to throw away the love of his species with the same arm that draws the sword of the tyrant, or unfurls the banner of aggressive warfare; and all for the sake of some trifling stake, some point of honour, some national claim not worth contending for, some nook of land whose fee simple would not be adequate to the price of a single battle, much less to the misery and wretchedness, the loss of life, and the horrors, worse than death, of a campaign. Grievous indeed is it, that this same spirit infests society to its core; and that in its smallest associations there will be found a spirit of discord, and calumny, and detraction, which will go far towards breaking down and destroying the principles of union in which alone consists safety. Yet this is the result of some perverting agency—the agency of evil passion, the consequence of that miserable change, which has made man the "bond-slave of hell;" and which can alone be remedied by that *conversion*, so frequently scoffed at by the ignorant and the impious; and which consists in a change of heart, and views, and feelings, effected by the spirit of God, and in

devotedness to the active love and service of Christ our king.

In the better parts of society, even such as it *now is*, we shall find much that is valuable, much that is worthy of preservation with niggard care; we shall find in it, not only the wish to participate our pleasures, but also the desire of sharing our sorrows, as well as of receiving consolation from the sympathy of others; we shall find in it a ground for the exchange of reciprocal sentiments, a provision for the agency and influence of mutual counsel; we shall find a source of individual instruction for the conduct of life; we shall observe a manner of affording mutual aid in all the difficulties, and of direction in all the dangers of life; we shall notice an arena for the exchange of moral impressions, and a stimulus to moral exertion, to that athletic action which is nerved by the observation of our fellow men, and which is braced by the duty of obedience, and energized by the prospect of the incorruptible crown, which awaits the conqueror; and we shall find abundant opportunities for that interchange of thought, and inter-community of ideas, which have been acquired by study and meditation, not for the gratification of the accumulator, but for the food of the common-weal. Where there is so much good, the principle of evil will also be found active; that malevolent counter-agent will do all in his power to stifle good, and to develop evil; mean envy saddens at its neighbour's happiness; selfishness refuses its tear of sympathy, and the out-

stretched hand of benevolence; confidence is abused, excessive caution is required, and even jealousy and suspicion are developed; advice becomes a medium for promoting the views of the interested; passion perplexes, and perverts the simplicity of obvious duty; the desire of aggrandizement interferes with the support of the views and wishes of others; too frequently does it become a field for the perfection of vice, and for giving countenance to unhallowed desire; too frequently does it offer a bonus to moral indolence, and encourage the individual by the association of numbers, in his aberrations from virtue; too often does it make him forgetful of the warfare of Christianity in which he is engaged, the contending earnestly for the truth; and too commonly does it debase the communion of society into the frivolity of emptiness, the frippery of polished fashion, the absence of idea, the folly of the hour, the passing events of the day, the varieties of the season, almost every thing but that which is worthy of the immortal mind, even if it do not become the pander to vicious design, and secret or open abomination.

In this picture of society as it really is, we find the *ease* of simple truth exchanged for the hollow observances of *politeness,* which has ceased to be what it *always ought to be,* the polished graceful expression of candid and benevolent feeling, and has been characterized by insincerity of intention, and by dissimulation in action; the tongue gives utterance to interest, feeling, and emotion, which the heart utterly disavows; while these expres-

sions are received on the other hand with an *appearance* of confidence and good-will, most distant from the real suspicion and doubt with which they are entertained. Thus, a system of mutual deception is maintained by the instrumentality of pleasing falsehood; occasionally giving rise to real error in judgment; but more frequently leading each party to contemn the littleness which can stoop to such base subterfuges, in order to conduct its sinister purposes.

But it will be necessary to notice more particularly the modes in which the social affections may be traced; and first, in the family circle, that small, but most perfect sphere for their exercise. Here they will grow and flourish unobserved, and will obtain that deep tinge of usefulness and worth, which should ever characterize their exercise. Even here, however, there is always an adverse principle, continually acting in opposition to these affections: selfishness interposes, and seeks its own gratification; and if we would strengthen the social tie, this must be repressed and mortified. The traces of its influence may be descried, even almost as soon as the ray of knowledge has betrayed the vitality of the mental manifestations. This principle demands the most strenuous opposition, not only as it forms a barrier to the present interchange of social and benevolent affection, but as it is the *channel* through which the influence of society proves ultimately ensnaring to the mind. It is a *selfish*

principle, which prompts man to seek for that society, which he knows to be injurious, and to be forbidden; and therefore in proportion as *it* is subdued, so not only are the charities of home, and of kindred, and of relationship developed; but the danger arising from intercourse with the world is lessened, and a state more favourable to the expansion of philanthropic sentiments is produced.

The young should be taught to form an exalted estimate of the influence of social affection: they should not suppose that this consists in the factitious ornaments or observances of civil society: these are very good in their place, but they should be contemplated as merely external formalities, which may be *assumed* by politeness, and which, though assuredly the companions of the exercise of social affection, do not necessarily spring from it. Even *civility* sometimes usurps the character, and attaches to itself the consequence, annexed to the genuine principle of which it is the shadow; while in fact, it is only the transparent medium through which the solid products of benevolence are descried; and it is confessed, that the social bond should originate in a deep regard for those with whom we stand connected, an esteem for their good qualities, a conviction of their worth, and a desire for their happiness; a desire, from the exercise of which on such objects, we may derive the purest satisfaction, and may act in our several social relations

with propriety and feeling, rather than from the influence of, or a regard to the decencies of common behaviour.

The privileges of society originate in an *active* principle of justice and beneficence, not in any series of negative duties ; a principle, which leads us to employ our whole energy in pursuit of the good and the comfort of others, and even to sacrifice our own convenience and gratification to secure their continuance. An opportunity for the exercise of the social virtues, and for the development of this their most important basis, upon which the fabric of society has been reared, and can alone be sustained, is afforded towards those with whom the young stand more closely connected in the ties of paternal affection ; a lasting foundation, on which the mother's intentions may be fulfilled, and the active virtues may be brought to the test of experience ; while their practice is enforced by daily precept and uniform example, and encouraged by the stimulus of approbation and the result of *peace*. Here too, some of the most important lessons of future practical wisdom may be learned ; as for instance, the *necessity* of being influenced by a regard to the feelings, the comforts, the welfare, and the prejudices of others ; yielding *our* wishes to *their* reasonable desires ; and considering the happiness of those around us, as the indispensable basis of our own. These are truths, which we must practise in order to be happy ; and they may perhaps be all referred to one great and original principle, *self-*

denial, so influencing all our conduct, as that it should be variously modified by the forms of feeling and of action in which it originates.

As a common consequence of our fallen nature, the social affections are liable to interruption from the sinister agency of improper disposition, not only of selfishness, that prolific parent of a large progeny of evils, but of passion, anger, malice, pride, revenge, and other varied forms of depraved propensity. While then the parent inculcates, and exemplifies the principle of social affection, and its influence upon the character, throughout every stage in the journey of life, in all its several combinations and modifications, she will also be careful to repress all dissocial feelings and actions, not only as they disturb the present harmony and joy of her children, but as they will prove a fertile source of sin and sorrow.

The mode of their conduct *towards inferiors,* will not here be forgotten; since these duties are of equal importance with those, which interest the feelings more particularly. It behoves us to seek their happiness, to be mindful of their sorrows, to alleviate their cares, and to lighten their burdens, as far as possible. These objects are not to be obtained so much by actual sympathy and participation, as by shewing, that we are not indifferent to their comfort; that their happiness is an object we keep constantly in view; that we scrupulously avoid adding to their cares; that we take pains to diminish the evils of servitude: and that when we have occasion to demand their at-

tentions, we do it, in a way which shall not make the yoke of inferiority galling. There should be on the one hand, the benevolence of asking without solicitation; and on the other, the readiness of complying obedience, without the abjectness of servility. More may be accomplished by a *kind*, and what is usually termed *condescending* behaviour to inferiors, in adding to their happiness, and securing their zealous services, than we have it in our power to do, towards those with whom we can more equally sympathize; but who, for that very reason, are less easily comforted. It is all very well to talk of *condescension* to inferiors, as a valuable trait in the benevolent character; but in point of fact, there can be no *condescension*, where there is not an apparent loss of dignity; where there is no danger of a supposed amalgamation of character, between the *condescending* and the *obliged:* consequently, *there is no room for its exercise*, where the difference in situation and circumstances is great; *there is no room for its exercise*, in visiting the cottage of the poor, or in conduct towards servants: it is only when the characters more nearly meet, and when the individual steps from a higher, to a *little lower grade* in society, that this principle *can* be exercised. Let not then the observance of proper behaviour towards domestics be ennobled as a virtuous exertion of benevolence; let it take its proper sphere, and be inculcated as an act of duty, as a portion of that talent entrusted to us, for the good of ourselves and others, and for the glory of God.

Besides, it is surely a most valuable object, to relieve the wants of those who are the most helpless; who cannot so relieve us in return; but who render us their services, and exert themselves for our comfort. There is throughout society, a chain of mutual dependence; and a single link of this chain cannot be severed without introducing confusion and disorder; nay more, a single link cannot be misplaced, without occasioning anarchy, distrust, and that loss of peculiarity, and distinctness, which would threaten the entire subversion of the structure of society; that goodly edifice, which may be preserved by order, but which must crumble into ruins, where *servants bear rule,* and princes are governed, and the proprieties of station are not well defined and observed. In this chain we shall find, that the highest link is resting for its integrity upon the lowest, and upon every intermediate one, and so on in *inverse proportion.* Thus the master depends upon his servants for many comforts, for obedience, for the supply of his daily wants, and for his domestic peace; while on the contrary, the servant waits upon his master for regular food, for constant protection, for adequate remuneration, for kindness of behaviour, for succour in sickness and distress, and for support in old age and infirmity. It is only by keeping in view these relative duties, that the peace and good order of society can be preserved: be it then the duty of the superior to be zealous in doing *his part;* and then may he be inflexible in requiring the full

and willing service of inferiors: be it also the duty of the parent to instruct the young in these offices of justice and good feeling; and while she requires on the part of domestics, rigid attention to the wants of her offspring, let her be equally immovable in enforcing *their* kind conduct to servants, and equally just in suppressing the first indications of tyrannical propensity. Where this principle is wanting, and where no attention is paid to the wants, comfort, and feelings of attendants, because they are inferiors, and because they may not possess an equal share of cultivation and refinement, a similar conduct will, in process of time, influence our intercourse with others, who may chance to differ from ourselves, or to be deficient in some of our supposed valuable qualities. Hence it must be carefully inculcated, that a certain order of social feeling, should be exercised towards those who are not placed by Providence in the same situation with ourselves; and that we should be even *more* attentive to their necessities. Example also, will be here of the first consequence. If the heads of families be kind towards their servants, so will be in all probability, their children; but if they be austere, capricious, morose, often unjust, tyrannical, vindictive, and careless of their feelings; the same principles will actuate the bosom of their offspring, and will convert the puny arm of infancy, into the cruel sceptre of despotic power.

CHAP. XXI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

The time will necessarily arrive, when the child, hitherto confined to the society of its own family, will long to taste the enjoyment of that of others: indeed this measure is necessary to the complete formation of the character. But the greatest care is required in the application of this necessity; since the impressions now received are abiding; and remain to influence the conduct, to direct the judgment, and to guide the heart. The child which is confined to its own nursery, will frame for itself, the notion of a microcosm, wherein all its ideas and social feelings, will be confined to the narrow sphere of its nearest relations; and it will not there have learned to extend its pity, its compassion, its benevolence, its sense of duty, its active exertions, to all those with whom it may stand connected; it will not have been taught to expand the self-denying virtues to *all men;* it will not have been taught, that it should *go about doing good;* but *even this* little world of action of its own creation, peopled by its dearest relatives, and animated by its peculiar feelings and passions, will be narrowed by the

cheerless gloom of selfishness, and circumscribed by the thick darkness of anti-social feeling. The principle of benevolence will be sparingly employed, and will be bounded by the narrow limit of relative connexion, instead of animating, (though in very different degrees,) as it should animate, and vivifying, as it should vivify, every thought and action, however extensively, however remotely these may be connected with society. In simple truth, *every act* ought to be influenced in some measure by the consideration of others.

In order that the principle may be thus applied, the individual must be carried out of himself, and his relations, into exterior society, where alone it can reach its perfect maturity. But this path is beset with snares and dangers: happy is that child who has a parent for its guide: for while it is called upon to proceed along a narrow and a slippery road, with flowery, but precipitous banks on either side, and while one false step may prove ruinous to its immortal welfare: when the faculties of imitation and curiosity are so busily engaged; when the influence of companions is so great, and requires to be so deliberately and wisely estimated: when the attractions from the centre of virtue are so numerous and so powerful; when conformity with the world is to be avoided, shunned, and deprecated as one of the greatest evils; and when to be imbued with its maxims, to catch its manners, and to imbibe its habits of thinking, and feeling, and acting, would be most seriously prejudicial to the character: it becomes

a most important duty, and a primary effort of maternal solicitude, to communicate a knowledge of its dangers, to watch its influence upon the mind, to be cautious in the administration of its stimuli, to be circumspect in her choice of companions, to be diligent in detecting the snares which attend the footsteps of the heedless and the unwary, and to guide their feet into the way of truth. The light of divine revelation, of the "wondrous things which are contained in the law of God, and in the knowledge of his will, can alone direct and guide us through the labyrinths of society, and counteract the imitative tendency which man possesses, to acquire the manners, to assume the habits, to exercise the dispositions, to be influenced by the same spirit, to believe the same doctrines, to think the same thoughts, to form the same opinions, to be guided by the same maxims, to be governed by similar motives, and in general to be amalgamated with those around him, and to be made like them.

Hence the very great importance of the parent's selecting good companions for her children. Indeed so powerful is the influence of those, with whom the young are associated, that she must be on her guard against intercourse with that society, contact with which is not likely to inform the understanding, or improve the heart; her object will be to select as companions for her family, those who fear God, and love and serve him in sincerity. But this object is not to be obtained invariably, even by the most rigid choice: yet,

there cannot be an entire seclusion from the society of others; and if this *were possible,* it would scarcely be desirable, for those who are to live *in* the world, and yet to live *above* its influence; to be courteous towards all men, and yet not to be imbued with their spirit. The grand thing, is to be always mindful, that the spirit of the world is at enmity with God; and that it is frequently erroneous in its judgment, hasty and unjust in its decisions, inadequate in its conceptions, prejudiced in its ideas as to the real nature of right and wrong; that its views are often the result of adopting a false standard of right; that its system is too frequently a mass of contradictions; that its opinions are very generally the hasty results of passion, and prejudice, and circumstance, and occasion; and that its maxims are often the spontaneous consequence of the operation of a system of expediency. Here, the important lesson of wisdom, is to recollect, that there can be no contradiction in truth; and that the only pure source of doctrine is the revealed word of God; that this is the sole test of opinion, removed far above the influence of every inferior consideration; and that this alone contains the maxims of the truest wisdom, to be at variance with which,—aye more, to do less than which, is to be found wanting, to be declared unprofitable, and to be wandering from the narrow way which leads to life. The Bible is the religion of the just; and to it alone must be referred every part of thought, and feeling, and action: all that is consistent

with it may be safely indulged: all that contravenes its spirit, must be studiously, invariably opposed.

This will be the only sure guide in the choice of companions; and *intimacy*, but above all, friendship will be shunned with those who do not *acknowledge*, though they may not *feel*, the influence of vital Christianity, as an active principle of faith and obedience. Companions should be carefully, aye, even fastidiously selected from among the children of those whose views of divine truth, and of its obligation on the heart and life, are congenial with our own; who are profoundly impressed with similar caution and anxiety, on the great subjects of physical and intellectual, moral and religious education; who are particularly influenced in practice, by the deeply founded belief of their opinions; and who are equally concerned for the eternal welfare of their offspring. In such society, *our* efforts *may* be strengthened; at all events they will not be counteracted. Let it be ever recollected, that this selection must be rigidly made, not from among those who *profess* largely, but from those who actually and practically *do* attend to the moral education of their children; not from among those who make a parade of their devotion, but from the pupils of the simple, humble, unobtrusive, sincere instructor, whose object is to *do*, not to be *talked of;* whose design is to produce an effect upon the heart, not to make a shew of religious acquirement, or of that inope-

rative knowledge, which floats on the surface of the understanding, but never sinks deep into the heart.

And even then, caution is demanded, lest the child should acquire that degree of relish for mixed society, which will produce an undue attachment towards it, or make it indispensable for its amusement. Children should be brought up with few wants and desires; and this is one, which they should be taught to do without; and to find in their own minds those ample resources, which will stand in the place of "a kingdom" of companions, and yet will fit them for profitable society whenever they may be thrown into it.

The intercourse of children, should have an instructive tendency; not that they are to be constituted a tribe of little sages, and philosophers; not that their natural bias to hilarity, and cheerfulness, and buoyancy of spirits, the gambol of health, and the festivities of a mind at ease, delighting in every thing around it, and without a single anxiety for to-morrow, *is to be opposed;* but only that the great end of assembling together in society, should not be forgotten, viz. to enlarge the understanding by the collision of varied talent and intellect; to develop the affections of the heart; and to afford opportunities for the exercise of those sentiments and passions, which will constitute the society of children, an epitome in miniature of human life. Hence, the importance of always having a prudent and in-

terested adult, to enter into the amusements of youth, to regulate their conduct, to repress evil passion, and to give them an opportunity of becoming wiser and better, from that intercourse, which was "divinely bestowed upon man," and without which the love of society, will degenerate into a mere taste for visiting, and dress, and trifling, and dissipation.

Before we proceed to some concluding observations on society in general, it will be right to notice shortly, that form of connexion which is termed *friendship;* a liaison founded on the principle of sympathy, of that mysterious affinity between individuals, which leads to union, and which is daily and hourly cemented, by the desire of participating in all the painful and agreeable sensations, which in their turn, agitate, or calm and soothe the bosom of each. The *object* of friendship, is an analogous individual, or at least one in whom there exists a fancied resemblance, so considerable, that it may be placed in the room of the real principle. This analogy, like every other, is frequently formed in sensitive and imaginative minds, upon the slightest and the most incongruous grounds; a heated fancy discovers resemblances, where none really exist; and imagines affinities in the most discordant elements; and hence it is, that the web of friendship, woven by these airy nothings, is destroyed like the film of the gossamer, by the passing gale of the slighest opposition, by the autumnal sigh of the coming storm of adversity;

or even by the transient cloud of absence. Yet such is only fancied friendship, not the genuine principle, which is founded in esteem, in reciprocity of kind actions, in congeniality of taste, in identity of pursuit, in similar views, feelings, and conduct; which is cemented by time, deepened by affliction, is unimpaired by absence, and stands a monument of principle, amidst the ruin of this world's goods, in despite of change of circumstances, and notwithstanding all the buffetings and contentions of life.

Friendship is a noble, pure, and amiable principle; and it has this peculiar excellence above all the ties of immediate relationship, that it is valued for itself, and is not depending upon personal interest. Selfishness forms no part of its history; and the recollection of past services is only instrumental, in stimulating the desire for more extensive usefulness to its object. That it is a disinterested principle, is strongly proven, by the kind of individuals it selects for its agency; not the rich or the powerful; not those possessed of large patronage, and who may probably have it in their power, to aggrandize their favourites; but perhaps the poor and the indigent; at least the choice is made irrespective of the more favourable circumstances, and is often characterized by a thoughtlessness of generosity, which prudence forbids; for there is a degree of devotion in friendship, which would induce it to forego present and contingent advantages of an

important nature, in order to secure some slight good for its object.

Friendship is principally operative upon the young; early life is the season for that jocund confidence, that mutual interchange of heart and feeling, which forms the very essence of its influence, and which from the nature of things, ceases in a great measure to exert its power in old age. The confidence of friendship, is however to be carefully distinguished from that intercommunion of folly, which consists in retailing every silly thought and feeling, and in making the intercourse of friendship to consist in listening to an interminable series of impertinences, arising from the excited influence of feeling, operating upon a stimulated imagination. This absurd laying open of the heart, is the proof of a very weak, or wicked mind; the imaginations of man's heart, will not bear his own inspection without a blush; and should only be open to himself, and to *him* who seeth and knoweth all things; only *evil can arise* from exposing all its littlenesses, and foibles, and failings; and, *à fortiori*, its more painful deviations from rectitude, its frequent obliquities, its secret faults, its presumptuous sins!

Friendship is not a sudden fancy; and the young must be carefully warned against the dangerous temptation to confide in all those who profess largely, and appear deeply interested, and are willing, and even anxious, to cultivate inti-

mate acquaintance upon slight knowledge: they must be taught that any thing deserving the name, or possessing the attributes of friendship, is only to be obtained by slow growth, by cultivating a knowledge of the individual, testing his sincerity, estimating his principles, watching his conduct, and inquiring into his motives; and *then*, if all these be found worthy of confidence, reposing in him the trust of unshaken esteem, defending his character, turning a deaf ear to detraction, and believing not the insinuations of the tale-bearer. Friendship is a very *rare* production; and if the young will fancy, that every new acquaintance may be dignified with the title and attributes of *friend*, they will also find too late, their hopes blasted, their confidence abused, and their disappointment rendered more bitter by reflection on their own short-sighted conduct. If the mere acquaintance be treated as the true friend, the result will be, as if a man should carry a serpent in his bosom, should foster and cherish its languid actions into the intenseness of its maturity, in order the more surely to receive the bite from its most cruelly envenomed fang. *They* know not the world, and its cold, unfeeling selfishness, and they must be prepared, and preserved if possible from the punishment annexed to misplaced confidence. The friendship of the young too, requires great caution; for it will become the engine of much good or evil; it will strengthen the bond of virtue or it will weaken every moral tie, accordingly as the

good or the bad shall become its object. The parent will therefore watch over this connexion with jealous care, and will beware of too great intimacy, even with *the good*, which seldom terminates to the satisfaction of any party, and is generally of brief duration. Repeated disappointment is commonly the lot of the sanguine; and then is developed that reserve which is the product of experience, and the influence of which is extended over the life, so as to render the choice of friends more prudent; and to place it rather under the direction of the understanding, than of the heart and imagination. It is painful to confess that another, and an unfortunate result, is the consequence of this experience, viz. that friendship becomes less disinterested, less characterized by the glow of affection, less actuated by emotion, more calculating, and even occasionally partaking a degree of selfishness to which its original nature is adverse.

Genuine friendship is stimulated by the existence of obstacles to its development, because it is principled, and is not to be appalled or shaken from its firm and steady purpose by difficulties; the storms and troubles of life do but agitate its leaves in order that it may deepen its roots; it is not affrighted by danger, but animated to succour its object; and is more closely cemented when the danger is mutual; its recollections are cherished in absence, and the defence of its object is a sacred deposit, which it loses no opportunity of employing; it remains and even flourishes best in

poverty and misfortune, when the world frowns, and acquaintances neglect us, and our former companions drop away and know us no more; it is found when they who courted our society in prosperity, refuse to participate the evil fortune which awaits us: these, these are its cherished moments for activity and vigilance; these are the periods in which its greatest energies are put forth; these are the peculiar seasons in which its genuine devotion is manifested; these are the situations which evince the intrepid and unshaken zeal which no difficulties can arrest, and which perhaps are more energetically displayed in a state of society preceding the height of civilization; a boon which is sadly diminished by its attendant luxury, and refinement, and heartlessness; by the ultra-polished feeling it induces, and which serves to reflect, rather than to receive and appropriate, and be influenced by, reciprocal tenderness; these are the circumstances which no change of fortune will supersede, and which will shew the genuine friend to be always ardent in defending; and ingenious, and persevering, and immovable in administering consolation. *Constancy and durability* are the attributes of friendship, and constitute a wide and prominent difference between itself, and that flimsy veil which often assumes its name, for the purposes of self-interest, if not for a hypocritical, and a sinister, and a base agency: for there *are* those who cultivate confidence, only the more securely to de-

stroy their victim, and who make the sacred name of friendship, a mask for unprincipled design, or heartless passion; and there *are* those whose friendship is subjected to the cooling process of indifference.

A few remarks on intercourse with the world, will conclude the present subject. In arranging the visits of children, it is desirable to avoid, at all times, *large*, but above all *mixed* parties. It is incalculable the amount of mischief which may be thrown into the mind on these occasions; the seed which will vegetate and produce evil fruit. If the party be a large one, there cannot be that perfect superintending agency which is necessary to render it useful, and recourse must be had to some means of amusement, at least doubtful in its primary influence, and too frequently decidedly pernicious. Among these methods of wasting time, we must stigmatize balls, cards, and other games of hazard; and generally, all those dissipating employments which will tend to raise a blush, or to destroy the quick susceptibility of modesty; but which will be more particularly detailed in a subsequent chapter.

While visiting should be allowed to a child so frequently, as that it may not resemble a bird escaped from its cage, it must not be repeated so often as to unhinge the mind, to unfit it for the duties of education, and to produce a desire after indiscriminate society. Early intercourse with the world at large is to be dreaded; the air it

breathes is tainted with the infection of sin; and this appearing in the fashionable garb of social virtue is almost irresistibly attractive to the young and the unestablished, and rapidly leads to the vortex of equivocation, to maxims of policy, to motives of expediency, to the confines of the theatre, to the brilliance of the ball-room, to the destitution of the gaming-table, to the agony of unrepented crime, to the misery of remorse, and to the gates of death!

From this polluted atmosphere the child should be saved; yet after a certain time it will be unavoidably led to mix more or less with the society of the world at large; and then the guardian care of the parent is necessary to preserve the untried stranger from its evils, to warn of its dangers, to save from its snares, and to strengthen a decided opposition to its measures and its spirit, so often as these shall be found opposed to the measure of the law of God, and the spirit of Christ. Safety can alone be found for the humble inquirer, in constant vigilance, and does not any where exist for the proud, conceited wanderer. Society is the wide field for the display of our tempers, as they may or may not be influenced by a divine principle; it is above all others, the situation in which the disposition is most tried; in which there is the greatest need to search the heart, to form an acquaintance with its most secret motives, and to watch over the lips.

In all cases, *utility* should be the grand object

of social meeting, and we should be aware of the dangers to which it exposes us, in order that we may be prepared to avoid them when practicable, and to surmount them when they cannot be evaded. The means of accomplishing this most desirable object, are to call forth into active exercise the social virtues, and the sound principles of moral action; while we guard them from the dangers which environ, and which threaten the destruction of their vitality. *One* grand principle, will be found the master key to all that is just and valuable, viz. a principle of practical benevolence; not simply the active, busy, bustling charity, which is ever on the alert to relieve the wants and miseries of man; this indeed performs a most important part in the theatre of the world, but must yield in consequence, to the less obvious, but more extensively operative principle of *love*, which is seen not so much in active, as in passive duty; not so much in the relief of others' wo, as in the government of self; not so much in zeal and enthusiasm for a paticular form of opinion or action, as in the restraint of anger, and the subjugation of pride, and envy, and ambition, and hatred, and malice, and revenge; not so much in the offices of sympathy, as in the cultivation of esteem; not so much in the hollow professions of polite flattery, as in the simple uprightness of candour and sincerity; not so much in the ostentation of modesty, as in the exercise of patience under injuries, and the forgiveness of

enemies; not so much in the exhibition of talent, as in the suppression of ridicule, and in the adherence to justice; not so much in seeking after honour, and the reputation of society, as in striving to do the will of God, and to confer honour upon others; *always esteeming others better than ourselves.*

CHAP. XXII.

ON READING, AND ON THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

READING is the prolific source of knowledge, instruction, delight and usefulness; it is the great basis, on which the character of *valuable* must be finally and remotely fixed; it is a friendly guide through the mazes of opinion, and the intricacies of life; it is a companion whose society never fatigues: it is a pleasure which never cloys: and it affords an impregnable refuge from the storms of adversity; the cares and anxieties, and sorrows of the day; the toils of business; the vexations of this world's contumely; the impertinences of society; the buffetings and contentions of this active scene, on which so many are striving for the mastery; the disappointment of hope; the neglect of talent and merit; the privations of misfortune; the clouds of sickness, and the night of death; it affords the means of satisfactory reflection on the past, and of cheerful anticipation for futurity; it promises to those who will seek it, the wisdom which will compensate for the folly that is past, and for the suffering which it has entailed; it will enlighten our path

with the reflected and accumulated knowledge of past generations of the good and wise; it will furnish principles of action for all the varying circumstances of life; it will afford food for the mind to feast upon, and to enlarge, and develop, and strengthen and mature its manifestations; it will stand in the breach of temptation, and enable us to keep the citadel of the heart, when the outworks of attention have been gained, and when the feet had well nigh slipped, the steps were almost gone.

Such effects, however, can result only from the *proper influence of reading;* and in this imperfect state, it cannot be supposed that where there is so extensive a sphere of good, there will not also be a large admixture of evil, so that "this fountain, at which drink the good and wise," may become an "ever bubbling spring of endless lies;" so that it may be converted into the gross darkness which invests the mind with error worse than ignorance, and closes it against the access of truth; it may become the means of *stimulating the passions* instead of enlarging the understanding; it may fill the heart with images of evil, instead of storing it with the beauties of virtue; it may pre-occupy the attention with the shadows of scepticism, the unreal visions of doubt, the fantastic images of man's vain and limited conceptions, the creatures of superstition, or the material follies of those whose views are bounded by what they see, and hear, and taste, and touch and feel; it may endeavour to satisfy the cravings

of an immortal spirit with the empty husks of fiction; and it may so far succeed in depraving the mental appetite, that it shall accept *these* instead of substantial nourishment; it may place the gratification of sense in the room of the cultivation of intellect; and which is even more deplorable, it may substitute the latter for the infinitely momentous pursuit of religion; it may become the means of tempting us astray from the paths of virtue, and of bewildering us in the ever-shifting scenes of oblique opinion; it may be the companion which constantly allures to that which is wrong—the arch minister of vice, which saps the foundation of virtue in the heart, and leaves the edifice of morality to crumble around it, oppressed with its own unassisted weight, and sinking under the influence of its fruitless and impossible efforts. Knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice, religion and infidelity; the exclusive reign of the understanding on the passions; the depravation of the moral and intellectual faculties, or their gradual progress towards perfection, are all within the range of this powerful agent. By it the attention will be fixed on valuable objects, or lowered to the basest villainy; the perception of good will be rendered accurate and sensitive, or it will become blind to virtue, and alive only to vice; the memory will be furnished with principles of action, or it will be loaded with the images of folly and impurity; reason will be ennobled by truth, or perverted by its alliance with the worst, because the most fatal errors; reflec-

tion will delight to dwell on the stores of knowledge, and the strength of moral energies, or it will be amused with the merest trifles, if it be not occupied with the vanities, and follies, and wickedness of man; conscience will be enlarged and purified, or contracted and debased, its standard lowered, and its object grovelling; and the imagination will be worthily fixed on things which are not seen as yet, or it will be employed on images of fancy, the most equivocal in their nature, and the most doubtful in their influence: hence the parental duty of guiding, improving by cultivation, and directing a taste for reading, a thirst for pure and substantial knowledge.

Even the *communion of intelligent friends,* and their kindred sympathy, become insipid and uninteresting, unless their minds have been previously stored with knowledge which may instruct and augment the happiness of all by its communication. But the *pleasures of social intercourse* are not *always* to be enjoyed; and there are many periods when an hour can be redeemed from business, or the immediate demands of a profession, or the duties of domestic life; and if these be spent in listless inactivity, they are passed unhappily. A book is a resource of unceasing, and constantly augmenting pleasure; it affords occupation without exhaustion, pursuit without distraction, the enjoyment of labour without the weariness of satiety or the incapacity of fatigue; and that society may be rendered either pleasant

or profitable, such intervals of solitary study must have preceded.

But again, there are periods when the mind feels society to be irksome; when it becomes disgusted with its emptiness, or has acquired a distaste or disrelish for its pleasures; when it can no longer derive satisfaction from them, but longs to retire within itself, and to ruminate on its own stores: and to provide for *these* occasions, there must be a taste for *study*. And in order to secure the full effect of this reflection; that we may be independent of the world for amusement, and that we may escape the domination of that most capricious of tyrants, and be enabled to *give* the law to its influence, there must be adequate resources within the mind; these must be gradually accumulated, and hoarded with a miser's care; not however with the same selfish views, or from the mere love of adding heap to heap, but for the sake of feeding upon them ourselves, and dispensing of our stores to the hungry, and the thirsty, and the poor, the ignorant and the indigent, the feeble and the helpless, the widow and the orphan, the sick, the sorrowing and the dying, with every other form of want and destitution. With the solicitude of the miser, however, a frequent survey of our knowledge should be taken, lest any portion of it be lost; and it should be classed and arranged (not indeed according to any system of artificial, or technical, or philosophical memory, but according to the memory of

real life, the memory of principle, the memory of circumstance, and action, and occasion,) and so regularly disposed that we can go at once to our casket of selected valuables, and take from it the very gem we are in quest of. Thus, memory is a *vital action*, and as such possesses this peculiar property, that it is not merely an accumulation of materials, but a process of digestion, a conversion of the primitive elements of thought into newly-combined and associated forms. So the flower which charms by its beauty, and its fragrance, could never be produced by a chemical mixture of its component elements, and the agency of the grand orb of day upon them; these would still require the vital action of nature, the assimilation of those first principles, and their successive elaboration; the combined influence of the root, the stem, the vessels which convey and act upon the absorbed fluids, so that they may be converted into the different parts of the flower. So also the artist copies from nature, disposes his colours, touches and retouches, and the picture becomes a copy: but however correct the resemblance, there is still something wanting: we cannot see the flower expand as beneath our eye; we are not regaled by its fragrance; we see and know that it is the work of a painter, the labour of art, the humble imitation of man, not the perfect production of an almighty Architect: in fact, it wants vitality, that life which God alone can give it; that mysterious attribute, which does not result from the mere elective attraction of

homogeneous atoms, but from a principle superadded to them. Precisely thus is it with that mind which has gradually acquired knowledge, but which has not assimilated its stores by the digestion of reason and reflection; which has not systematized its acquisitions into principles, nor classified and combined them by the power of genius.

There is in man a natural love of freedom, and an instinctive aversion to *dependence*, while the idea of *independence* is peculiarly grateful, and may prove useful as a stimulus in the pursuit after knowledge; since *knowledge is power*, that power which can alone secure to us the possession of this boon, as well as teach the method for its *employment;* and it is only by the combination of these two, action and knowledge, that independence can be obtained.

If another motive to industry were wanting, it might be found in the very little that we *can* acquire, by the most patient and persevering exertion. Man is a strange anomaly, with mental powers so limited, yet so capacious! an anomaly which admits not of explication by any effort of reasoning, or any minuteness of research; an anomaly which can only be accounted for by imagining the existence of some change—some debasing influence, which has rendered the material organ unfit for that boundless manifestation of intellectual energy, which once constituted *him very good*, in the sight of Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Goodness. A humiliating truth, which

is explained by the Revelation of the *Most High*, against the force of which even the pride of human learning must bow; and which animates us to the only means of regaining the semblance of our high original, by the eager pursuit of this truest and most valuable knowledge.

Again, conversation becomes insipid, or suffers a most awkward interruption, or experiences a change in its direction worse than either, for want of ideas to furnish materials for its continuance, and because the minds of those who are engaged in it are not sufficiently stored with an adequate share of information: or they do not possess the faculty of communicating; a state, which commonly arises from the want of union and assimilation between the several parts of knowledge, so that they exist in confused and heterogeneous masses, and cannot be rendered available for the purposes of their possessors; for if this were not the case, the influence of science diffused through the different ramifications of mind must of necessity appear in conversation, thought, and action. From the want of copious information, the malicious, or at the very best the unguarded observation on the conduct of others, usurps the place of sober truth: too often the profession of a devoted attachment to virtue is made at once the vehicle and the cloak, for concealing a deformity of mind which (itself ill-stored) delights to feed and prey on the deficiencies of others; and too commonly studied ill-nature skulks its hateful form under the ap-

pearance of wit; and *then*, conversation becomes the field, not for intellectual improvement, not for the exercise of the purest affections, but for the gratification of ambition, envy, malice, revenge, and other hateful passions. If then the mind were more cultivated, there would be less tendency *to*, less necessity *for*, the frivolity of common intercourse, while materials would be furnished for the profitable interchange of idea.

Again, there is in the human mind, a natural aversion to become acquainted with itself; it shudders at the thought of such scrutiny; it shrinks from it with fear; it trembles to revolve its own actions, to trace their motives, and to review the secret springs which guide them. If it may have been previously unaccustomed to the task; when its importance *does* come to be more particularly felt and acknowledged; and when the mind strives to be governed by the principles of divine truth, it discovers its inability from want of use, to detect its own motives, to unravel their obliquities, to follow effects to their causes, and to separate truth from error, as the result of such investigation. There are under these circumstances, several sources of erroneous judgment, with which it is well to be acquainted: as for instance, in the *want* of an enlarged mind, to take liberal and comprehensive views, uninfluenced by feeling, unclouded by passion, undistorted by prejudice; and in *the habit* of drawing sweeping inferences from a small number of premises, without sufficiently maturing the data upon

which they are grounded, and without adequate consideration of the conclusions to which they lead. Here then, more enlarged information is required, that it may be known how to seek this acquaintance with self, instead of flying from such an examination; and in order that genuine sincerity of desire may be met by corresponding opportunities of purpose.

Notwithstanding the confirmed dislike of this scrutiny in general, there *is*, under certain circumstances, a tendency in the human mind to become acquainted with itself, so that if its peace be undisturbed, and its quietude unbroken, and its abstraction from the world be complete, and its pursuit be uninterrupted, it will in despite of itself, revolve its own interior operations,—aye, even more, it will commonly form a tolerably just judgment of their tendency. But still, with unequalled perversity, it flies from solitude; it seeks the haunts of society, and frequents the herds of the gay and the giddy, the dissipated and the thoughtless, in order that it may avoid and escape from this uneasy propensity. *Reading* may here be rendered beneficial, by precluding the necessity for trifling company; by leading the mind to retirement and meditation; by inducing a habit of serious thought and contemplation, as well as of reviewing the stores it may have acquired, and the possibility of their application to all the contingencies of life; a process which naturally leads to an inquiry into the principles, motives, and actions; and which will at

all events, render it capable of the required analysis; an analysis of such indispensable importance to the man who aims at rectitude of conduct, from no higher motive than a sense of honour and gentlemanlike feeling: *how much more to the Christian,* who is convinced of his manifold errors, and failings, and infirmities; whose grand desire is to do the will of Heaven; and who, after all, is the only *true gentleman,* the only one whose suavity of manner, and delicacy of tact, and uniformity and simplicity of benevolent design, and constant anxiety to secure the happiness of others, is founded on the just principle of the charity of the Bible.

Society is too frequently sought, not with the view of instructing and pleasing others; nor with the design of being pleased and instructed, but merely for the sake of amusement, and in order to obtain the capacity of frittering away time. Yet can any thing be more false in principle, more injurious in its consequences? And would not this evil habit be corrected, in part at least, by the mind being more generally informed, and by its possessing larger depôts from which to impart knowledge, in exchange for some other valuable consideration, some other portion of instruction? Where amusement only is sought after, chagrin and disappointment will be the result; and dissatisfaction is the consequence of that intercourse, which might have been exchanged for pleasure and improvement, if the resources of the mind had been cultivated. This, and this alone,

will preclude the emptiness of common conversation, and the necessity of applying to mixed society for relaxation. Even among the *good*, society is too often the signal for ceasing to be vigilant; it is the sphere in which the mind is said to *unbend*; but in reality, that in which it is most off its guard, in which it loses the tone and tension of health, is enfeebled, and easily ensnared and overcome. Improve then the understanding, and it will no longer be capable of resting satisfied with follies, with the topics of the day, or with other unmeaning trifles; it must direct its powers to those great truths, which instruct and enlarge its capacities, warm the heart, and develop the principles of thought and action.

But again, how many are there, who in their solitary hours become a prey to *ennui!* There are periods when solitude cannot be escaped from; and then the uninformed mind wanders, in its dreary inanity from place to place; *all* in its silent, still domain possesses the same uniform want of character, the stillness of an uninhabited island, with the only prospect of the ocean's useless immensity. After traversing without purpose, and without effort, this cheerless, gloomy, and unpeopled region, the mind becomes painfully impressed with the idea of its own destitution; the undefined shadow of itself produces trembling; its every action increases fear, and it remains fixed in uneasy silence, until relieved by the occurrence of some unsatisfying pleasure. During such a period of abstraction, the individual re-

sembles one who finds himself bewildered in an unknown track; he is conscious of the inability to extricate himself, and although just within the reach of safety, is yet unable to grasp it; he is startled by the sound of his own footsteps; he ejaculates, and his voice is re-echoed by the gloom; fear surrounds him with objects of terror; he listens with intense solicitude, and breathless anxiety, to every sound; and with a palpitating heart, he sits down paralysed by terror, and unconscious which way to move: the energies of his intelligence are lost, and he is actually unhappy. But with the well-stored mind, this would not be the case; for its intellectual resources would never fail to supply an abundant succession of innocent gratification; resources, which solitude cannot exhaust, but may augment; resources, which may be applied to the best purposes, and which may invigorate the faculties, and render them capable of renewed and increased exertion.

Pleasure, if enjoyed without the necessity for labour to procure it, soon ceases to delight and interest; it may dazzle for a moment; it may stimulate the senses; it may excite the passions; and yet its recurrence becomes irksome and unpleasing; and the sated appetite loathes the very food it had so anxiously desired. But in intellectual pleasure, *progress*, the fruit of our exertion, is delightful; and it is so, from the novelty and variety with which it is accompanied, as well as from the consciousness of improvement; while reflection may be employed to enhance, and in-

crease the value of successful pursuit, more especially, if the object of desire be worthy of the solicitude and efforts of a rational and immortal being. Such an individual may look *back* on the past, without shame or remorse, though with infinite regret, at the smallness of his progress, and the slowness of his advance, *compared* with the immensity of the field before him, and the reach of the talents with which he has been entrusted: while he will ever be looking *forward* with fresh interest; and will be anticipating the renewal of his opportunities of accumulating knowledge; not only with the consciousness of their innocence, but with the certainty of their being practically beneficial, and of their affording the means of storing the mind with information *which will be useful* as an active principle in the government of the conduct; as a safeguard against the influence of temptation; as a source of solid pleasure in domestic intercourse; forming in itself a pursuit of enjoyment, and fitting the mind for conversation and action.

The pleasure and advantage of *reading* are greatly enhanced by the several individuals of a family, uniting their powers upon one subject, and seeking after the attainment of information in one common track; for the abilities of each are energized by emulation and desire; the lamp of the understanding is lighted at the shrine of family union; the wing of imagination is plumed for its most active flight; and there is no satisfaction more solid or more endearing, none which

impresses a greater value on the hours as they pass, none which more thoroughly maintains the integrity of the domestic circle, or which furnishes more abundant materials for grateful reflection, than a community of intellectual pursuit.

Reading may, by the judicious instructor, and by her careful selection, according to her particular views, be rendered useful in stimulating any one faculty of the mind, which may appear to be deficient in strength; or in repressing or correcting that which may be redundant or erroneous. Thus the attention may be awakened, and the tendency of abstraction superseded, or it may be directed to worthy objects: the perception may be stimulated, or its too great susceptibility may be blunted, or its fallacious impressions may be corrected; the memory may be strengthened when feeble, or varied when exclusive; the reason may be rendered firm when vacillating, or it may be taught caution, when too confident, or its just powers may be defined, where the mist of doubt and scepticism hovers over it; reflection may be educed; the giddiness and étourderie of the young may be moderated, and brooding melancholy may be avoided; the power of conscience may be developed, while excessive scrupulousness and timidity may be superseded by the light of reason and revelation; and above all may be avoided, that *irritability* at trifles, which is so commonly joined with the deadening torpor, and insensibility to greater occasions; imagination may be stimulated, or re-

pressed, or recalled from its wanderings to juster views; the will may be strengthened in support of that which is just; or subjugated when existing in the form of obstinacy; or subdued, when based on fallacious data; and the faculty of imitation, may be led in the way of good example, or enfeebled when it approaches buffoonery, or corrected by sound principle; thus furnishing the most extensive means of influence upon the understanding and the heart.

This source of instruction may be polluted. As an engine of mischief, it does not escape the notice of the arch-enemy of mankind, and it has been seized and employed to forward his views, and to ensure the destruction of his subjects. By the press, error in opinion is disseminated far and wide; all that is false in religion, all that is injurious in morals has been defended; while, all that is dear to social and immortal man, has been scoffed at, and derided, and reviled: the means of information have become a vehicle for untruth; the poisoned chalice, delicious to the palate, and never awakening attention, until its effects are perceived, and the destruction of the individual happiness effected, has been eagerly quaffed at this source; reason and argument have been perverted into a support of the insurmountable difficulties of infidelity; vice has been defended, and invested with the specious garb of virtue; the nascent passions have been stimulated into precocious maturity; principle has been undermined; the necessity for reading

the Bible, and for other acts of religious worship has been denied; the influence of good example has been depreciated; the freedom of man's agency has been impugned, and his accountability deprecated, by the materialist, and the spiritualist; by *him* who asserts that *matter* thinks, reasons, reflects, and consequently governs; as well as by *him*, who declares that man is the blind creature of a certain influence, which he has no power to controul or contravene; virtue has been treated as a phantom, as a mere term of accommodation, or as intended to express a system of conventional expediency, which interest or any other powerful and selfish motive might supersede; a scheme of present trial and probation, and of a future eternity of rewards and punishments, has been treated as puerile, and as fitted only to influence the weak; and the power of man's wayward habits and vicious inclinations, has been defended as the simple result of that nature and organization, with which he has been supplied by infinite wisdom and goodness; thus blasphemously charging his errors and corruption on *Him* who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity! And since wisdom and folly, vice and virtue, truth and error, religion and irreligion, reason and passion, principle and prejudice, all own the *same source*, the greatest jealousy is required over the productions of the press, and a most careful selection from the tainted mass, of such as shall have escaped pollution; of such works of science and know-

ledge as may be required for the purposes of general information; and which may be more particularly calculated to advance the great end of existence—christian morality! The *influence* of reading upon the mind, must also be narrowly watched; but since these subjects will again claim our attention in the next chapter, we shall conclude the present by remarking, that all *knowledge must be subordinated to religion*, that it must be its handmaid, and that by it, it must be governed and regulated.

There exists on this subject considerable prejudice by those who undervalue human learning, as well as by those who think it too exclusively deserving of attention and regard. The influence of religion shines most conspicuously in the well-stored mind; it appears with a brighter lustre; it is more extensively useful, and its pleasures are augmented. But on the contrary, there is a danger of over-valuing intellectual attainments, and therefore an inordinate attachment to pursuits of an exclusively literary character should be repressed; their proper place in the heart should be carefully guarded, and the mind should be principally directed towards objects of a brighter nature. It is, however, a most mistaken idea, that scientific pursuits do *necessarily* secularize the heart, absorb the attention, and call off the understanding from the pearl of great price, the hidden treasure, for which the wise man selleth all that he hath, in order that he may become its possessor. No! the faculty of obtaining know-

ledge, is a talent of the highest order, and it must be improved; it is that splendid gift, which if properly employed, will produce *ten talents more* and will place its possessor in the situation of being accounted a faithful servant, and of receiving a still greater accession of influence; or it is that humbler possession, which if it be not improved to the utmost, but suffered to be hidden in the earth, to lay concealed and unemployed, will subject "the slothful and *wicked* servant," because unprofitable, to the doom of outer darkness, where "shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The rule of conduct is simple, but it is narrow; and to preserve the footsteps on its pathway requires attention and watchfulness. Human learning should be pursued in subordination to religion; it should be auxiliary to the influence of divine truth upon the heart, and with the view of its more extensive diffusion; for since all knowledge is power, so especially is its influence exerted over others; and so is it required that this agency should be employed on the side of all that is valuable to man.

Thus then, the steady pursuit of piety, the longing after immortality, the uniform seeking after heaven, the striving after conformity to the will and the character of the Most High, the desire to be obedient to his laws, and to be influenced by his precepts, are by no means incompatible with the acquisition of human learning; on the contrary, the very nature of the former is a reason for seeking after the operation of the latter,

because it opens a wide and almost boundless field for the useful and moral application of this knowledge. The precepts of our holy religion do, however, most clearly forbid *that the heart* should be set on any thing short of God himself; and the Scriptures do most clearly enjoin, that it should be supremely engaged in his service, and that all its undertakings should be characterized by submission to his will, and by a desire of living to his glory, and of extending the boundaries of his kingdom.

Human learning then is good, as it enlarges the mind, refines the feelings, extends the opportunities for usefulness, and stimulates the mind to embrace them. The knowledge of character, the extension of idea, the command of language, and the clear systematic views which study enables us to obtain, are all of great importance to the active Christian, who wishes to extend the knowledge of his Master and Redeemer; and will all tend to make him humble, because it will show him how limited is his wisdom, how inadequate his capacity, how poor his most expressive language, how obscure and ill-defined his best perceptions, in fact, how little he is prepared for the great work which is before him. True indeed it is, that the pride of earthly wisdom, of that knowledge which centres in self, and whose beginning and end are in the little circle which it describes, is in direct hostility to religion; hence learning must be engrafted on its humbling truths, and *then* it will be beneficial to the mind *now*, and will

return in copious showers of blessing at a distant period. But if, on the contrary, the wisdom of science be constituted the chief concern, and religion be made the secondary consideration; then the vanity which is consequent upon such acquisitions, will prove to the mere votary of intellect, an obstacle to the reception of the truths of the gospel; a deceived heart will have turned him aside, and he will have greedily devoured the empty husks of literature, from which the pure juice of the grape has been expressed, by some more cautious traveller.

In conducting the process of education, let parents beware that the *flowers* of rhetoric be made subsidiary to the fruits of piety. Let the truths of religion be first inculcated; and let all other knowledge be considered as inferior to it, as the atmosphere which is necessary to diffuse the light and heat of the sun of righteousness; and valuable only in so far as it tends to make its possessor more actively and more extensively useful. In this way, intellect will hold its proper place; for it would be dearly purchased, if obtained by the sacrifice of religious hope, and joy, and duty; it would be dearly purchased, if the reputation for mind *here* had been received in exchange for a *futurity* of peace and happiness; for "what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The anxious parent will take care to provide religious reading for her child; such as will mould its principles, and store its understand-

ing, and soften its heart, and lead it to Jesus the kind shepherd, who carries the lambs in his arms; she will also shew the continual dependence of every part of conduct upon the precepts of the gospel, and of every good, and wise, and holy thought, upon the teaching of the Spirit of God: and she will follow up this impression by all the means in her power, particularly by writing from recollection the sermon which it may have heard, or by committing to paper its own views of different texts, which she will select according to the capacity and the peculiar wants of the child; thus shewing that the arts of human learning lead to the improvement of time, to works of benevolence here, and to a preparation for heaven.

Still there will be danger that intellectual attainments may be over-valued, and that the heart may be engrossed by amassing these treasures, these corruptible riches, of which at best, the rust of old age will destroy the value, if it may not have been previously devoured by the moth of disease; it will therefore always be necessary to keep steadily in view, the insufficiency of human learning, however valuable, to confer happiness, to supply strength and consolation in difficulties and trials, or even *so* to guide us in prosperity, *as* that we may be enabled to keep the straight path of everlasting truth; it will be necessary to shew its dangerous tendency in alienating the heart from God and its best interests; together with the absurdity, as well as wickedness of constituting *this* the god of our idolatry, and of placing

on its altar the sacrifice of our peace, in the hope or vain expectation, that it would be consumed by the fire of *the spirit:* it will be necessary to explain the narrow boundary within which all our inquiries are confined, and the ultimate limit which is placed every where to our researches; it will be right to preserve a lasting and lively impression of the comparatively small portion we *can* acquire, even of that which is already known; it will be requisite to estimate properly the very minute sphere of our actual scientific knowledge, compared with the imperfect distant glimpses which we occasionally catch of that which is hidden from our sight in the immensity of the universe; it will be desirable to enforce the insignificance of this transient knowledge on the bed of death, when the soul is fast bidding adieu to every earthly association, and entering upon those untried scenes of joy or sorrow which exist beyond it; and how contemptible it will then appear, when contrasted with ardent thirsting after God, seeking to do his will, contemplating his mercy and love, and ascertaining our own interest in these, or at least proving our belief in them by the fruits of constant obedience. How trifling are the stores of wisdom and learning, and the highest acquisitions of literary fame, compared with the depths, yet the simplicity and beauty of the scheme of Christianity; to comprehend which, men become fools in themselves, that they may be wise in Christ, that they may be wise to eternity, and find the way to heaven.

The *world* may celebrate its heroes; it may load

its statesmen with honours; it may accumulate wealth, and power, and influence, around its merchants; it may confer the boon of reputation upon its philosophers, and it may canonize the recollection of its literati; but *the church of God* dwells on the memory of the just, of those who walked with God; of those who being dead yet speak, and who were, and are witnesses of the redeeming love of the *most High God; the angels* of God, rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, and findeth mercy; and *Christ himself* delights to dwell in the humble and the contrite heart; in the bosom of him who, with child-like simplicity, seeks for wisdom from on high, and cultivates present knowledge as subsidiary to that which is more important. These are the only truly honourable, and learned, and wise, and powerful; these are they which have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and are brought out of much tribulation, to a crown of glory, who possess the palm of victory, and are entitled to that acceptable inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

HAVING fostered, and encouraged and developed a taste for reading, the parent must now instruct that *taste,* and guide its operation according to her peculiar design and the necessities of her little pupil; and this principle immediately involves the selection of literary pursuit, as well as the choice of books, which are to forward its acquisition.

The nursery library is abundantly stored with works suited to the capacity of children of different ages, and among these there will be found an excellent variety; but the very profusion with which they abound may throw the parent off her guard, and lead her to permit to her offspring an indiscriminate access to these little books which are to form the mind and influence the character. Yet in this abundance there are *many* which should be cautiously withheld, and therefore the instructor should first become acquainted with the nature of the work she places in the hands of her child, and should exercise a rigid criticism, and a sound discretion in her choice.

Some of these works aim simply at the information of the understanding; and here there is less danger; the chief consideration being, whether that object is accomplished in the simplest and the most attractive form. Others are intended only for amusement, and as such possess a more doubtful character, lest the effort to *please* should have been made at the expense of some important principle of action. But there are *those* which assume the guidance of the heart, and pretend to influence the conduct; to subdue the passions; to regulate the temper; to arouse *good,* and to subdue evil dispositions; to lead the young into the path of Christian morality; the path which *should lead* to *Christ himself,* faith in his finished sacrifice, and obedience to his perfect will.

This, however, is the great field for mistake and error. In many of these productions the exercise of good dispositions is represented as *natural;* is inculcated *because* it is pleasing to others; is *rewarded* with their esteem and admiration, and is crowned with invariable success. The practice of virtue is recommended as a matter of *policy;* and the little heroes and heroines, placed often in impossible circumstances of danger and difficulty, are extricated from them by a rigid adherence to some prominent principle, founded on this basis. And again, when the correction of evil temper and disposition is the object, *these* are represented as unamiable, as rendering the character less estimable in the eyes of surrounding friends; and as meeting with their *natural*

punishment, and adequate atonement in the unhappiness and suffering consequent upon their exercise.

Thus then unwarily, there may be two palpable errors impressed upon the tender and too susceptible mind of infancy, viz. the practice of virtue on a false principle, and the representation of virtue and vice as meeting with their appropriate reward in this life. *Fallacious motives* for action are thus early developed; and *these* subsequently act as *prejudices* against the reception of the doctrines of divine truth, and their influence upon the heart and conduct: the former inculcate virtue for itself and its secular advantages, the latter as being obedience to the will of God; the one points to present comfort as the consequence of good action, while the other looks forward to that sure recompense of reward which consists in the testimony of a good conscience, and in the mansions of peace which have been prepared for the *just*.

Again, the practice of virtue is represented as originating in *innate goodness of heart;* and as consisting in the performance of duties towards others, to which the mind is naturally inclined, and upon the principle of obtaining their esteem. Yet how defective is this system! how injurious its tendency! For while the Scripture teaches the corruption of the heart, *these* speak of it as pure and spotless: the mind is prepossessed with the idea of its innate goodness, instead of its universal depravity, worthlessness, and inability to

do or to think any *one good thing*. *Piety* is represented as consisting, not in a change of heart, and in conformity to the Saviour's image, and in obedience to his will, and delighting in his laws, and living in his precepts, and rejoicing in his statutes; but in a regulation of the external conduct, according to some imperfect standard of right, and originating from an innate love of virtue, a natural tendency to that which is *good!* Christian Revelation is forgotten; and a false, delusive, and destructive system is substituted in its place. Here, too, the esteem of others is taught as the ground and motive to action, and the principal object of pursuit; and the exercise of virtuous principle is inculcated, not because it is the will of God, and an act of duty, and the appropriate homage of feeble, erring, helpless man, towards *Him* who is strength, and wisdom, and righteousness; but because it is pleasing to man, and will obtain his praise. And since *practical piety*, and glaring vice are represented as meeting their appropriate reward and punishment *here*, the young mind is taught not to look beyond the present life for the exaltation of the one and the degradation of the other: yet it cannot be long before an opportunity is afforded of observing, that virtue is not *always* rewarded, nor vice *always* punished in this world; but that on the contrary, the one is frequently triumphant, while the other is neglected. *Disappointment* is the consequence of this observation; and oftentimes there will result a secret murmur at this apparent

incongruity in the dispensations of a Being of infinite wisdom, and purity, and justice.

Not only is this false view produced, (and one error in opinion is bad enough,) but it is associated with others; for by the supposition, an opportunity is lost for shewing that virtue *must not* always look for its reward *here;* indeed that it is not to be stimulated at all by the prospect of recompense; but that as God is infinitely *good* and *just*—as *he hates* sin, and *loves* righteousness, so there must be a state of future rewards and punishments; and that it is there only that upright conduct and conversation will be duly appreciated: while dependence upon God, and a constant looking to the equalization of all difficulties at the final audit, are the best means of supporting the oppressed heart in adversity. Thus, then, the varying modifications of this *defective system of morality* will prove a beacon to guide the parental censor; which will lead her to select those works on which the impress of *Christian morality* is decidedly prominent, or in which she will at least obtain an opportunity of shewing the basis upon which this should always rest.

I. Works of Fiction.

The press daily teems with little tales of fancy; the creations of a moderate imagination after dinner; when the powers of the brain were accumulated upon some distant bodily function, and when therefore the manifestations of mind would be less active, less energetic, partaking more of its material cloud than of its pristine and etherial

nature. It may be remarked with regard to tales of acknowledged fiction, from which instruction is intended to be derived, that they uniformly constitute a *bad medium* for conveying mental impressions; while it will often happen, that the impressions themselves thus received are very far from being correct. Thus, for instance, these works of imagination appeal chiefly to that faculty; the appeal is either quickly evanescent, or it communicates an erroneous excitement to this busy power. It is indeed true, that without the aid and influence of imagination, action loses much of its present character; but then it is also true, that the latter should *originate* in reason and the understanding, however much it may be secondarily modified by the fancy. In early infancy, the great effort should be to inform the judgment, and to convey just impressions of things as they *really* are; and therefore works of acknowledged fiction should be sparingly supplied.

There are other books for children, to which not only is the air of probability and *vraisemblance* communicated, but the colouring of actual reality is given to scenes which never had, and never can have an existence—a local habitation and a name. The tendency of such works is for the most part injurious; for although attention may be aroused, and surprise be excited—and although the mind may wonder at the monstrous combinations it beholds; and although the imagination may be filled with stories of the marvel-

lous and the impossible, the present inquiry is, will it be benefited and instructed? It never can; but on the contrary, so soon as it is capable of reflection, it perceives the want of sincerity and veracity in the person whose fictitious character it contemplates; and disgusted with the attempt at imposition, it disbelieves all that was intended to have been inculcated, and a recoil is excited against wisdom in general. The human mind is so constituted, that it cannot be cheated into knowledge; and when once it perceives a want of *truth* in the monitor, there is no chance that his influence can be any longer exerted beneficially. Rousseau was of opinion, that *birds and beasts* should not be made to *speak;* and without any predilection in favour of that apostle of expediency, there is perhaps much truth in the observation. So decidedly averse will be the reflecting parent to the use of fiction in conveying instruction, and especially religious knowledge, that she will be very cautious how she employs it as an engine, since it cannot be thoroughly divested of an air of improbability, which entirely destroys its effect; and which effect, even if it could be fully experienced, would at all events be insufficient, frequently injudicious, and sometimes even positively baneful.

II. Abridgements, &c. &c.

The juvenile library swarms with excerpt productions; with abridgements of one, extracts from another, beauties of a third, souvenirs of a fourth, a pocket encyclopædia of all, and other equally

compendious methods of obtaining slight and superficial knowledge, or of forming a kind of *hortus siccus* of the flowers of literature, in which the miserable, dried and lifeless specimens may be acquired without the effort, or the industry of study, and independently of the energies of research; *qualities, without which* it is impossible to form a full, substantial, and valuable character. In the dried specimen we may trace a number of leaves naturally disposed; we may ascertain the stem, the bud, the flower, the various colours; we may acknowledge the beauty of the preservation but we can never be induced to believe it a living flower; for we know that *this* should possess other characteristics besides those just enumerated: its beauty may attract the eye, but its fragrance should charm the senses, and we should be delighted with its growth, and the perfection of its enjoyment; but *here* the flower wants vitality. And so, however correct may be the representation of the different parts of a character *thus* formed principally from abridgements, still it will want vitality, the living energy of a living whole. It may indeed be sprightly; it may be able occasionally to afford one of its pilfered remarks, but will never shew itself possessed of sterling worth, by patient investigation, or by the pursuit of a subject beyond the first glare of impression.

Abridgements, abstracts, epitomes, are excellent when they are the result of the intellectual labour of the individual, the digest of his own

mind; but when they are presented as already digested, it will at once be seen how mischievously they must operate, by cutting off the process of assimilation, without which there can be no *nutrition*; hence, then, they are to be avoided in general as useless and injurious; calculated to fill the mind with detached shreds of knowledge, but not to lay the basis of solid information. It is *possible* that they may be occasionally useful to stimulate an individual who may be torpid and lethargic, devoid of ardour, wanting in a thirst for knowledge, and deficient in the energy necessary for the pursuit of literary acquisition: *here*, they may allure to action and perseverance, but in no other case will they be admissible; and even in this solitary exception, they must be employed with extreme caution; for if they stimulate the indolent, they will also give that *smattering* of information with which they will be abundantly contented; so that they will not be at the trouble of tracing the streamlet to its source, and of resting *satisfied* only with full draughts from the fountain head.

The tendency of this entire class of works is essentially debilitating; and although they may furnish ready materials for conversation, and stand in the room of effective knowledge; and even in some measure supply a lack of the powers of acquisition, yet their operation upon a sound and healthy mind is ever to enfeeble, and to produce morbid action. This is particularly shewn by the *sickly taste* which they develop; a mawkish desire

after insipidity; a preference of various littlenesses, which betray the fastidiousness of the epicure, without his power of discrimination. The understanding loses nothing by grasping after high and large attainments; while when it ceases to aspire, it droops, it even crouches itself into the narrow limits it has prescribed; until, from habitual stooping, it has acquired the contracted posture; rests contented with its downward look; is no longer able to expand its wings, and take its flight to higher regions, but daily loses the power which it should derive as the fruit of constant exertion.

Neither is this contracting influence exerted upon the understanding only; it extends to the heart, and the sphere of the affective faculties is limited and controuled. The operation of this combined agency upon the understanding and the heart is exhibited in *action*, which becomes feeble but impulsive; blazing for a moment, but soon dying away to be known no more for ever; there will not be a steady, uniform, and deliberate pursuit, but an indolent longing, which will crumble away under the first breath of opposition; the whole moral system is affected, and feebleness and irritability are its prevalent characteristics. However easy then may be this method of conveying instruction, however little trouble it may occasion to the instructor, and still less to the informed; yet at the very best, it will be scanty knowledge without power to

employ it; a knowledge which tarnishes from disuse, and which is of no practical utility.

III. Since the mother is the appointed *guardian* of her child; and since she has early developed a taste for reading, so must this guardianship extend to a period farther advanced in life, when it now reads for its own delight, and eagerly seeks the knowledge to be met with in authors; when this reading is no longer under her immediate eye, so that she might at once correct a wrong impression, or explain the fallacy of an erroneous opinion, or shew its unjust, anti-social, or irreligious tendency. And when the sentiments thus conveyed to the unalarmed, unsuspecting understanding, are suffered to make their quiet unobtrusive impression upon the heart; *then* it is, that she will be doubly vigilant as to the direction of this talent; and that she will be cautious, aye, almost fastidious, as to the nature of the works, to which the young, may have permitted access. The parent will not forget, that at this most impressible period, before the principles have been fully established, and under the powerful influence of the imitative faculty, not yet sufficiently controuled by judgment and experience, the mind is equally capable of receiving a *bad as a good* impression; and that as it is prone to evil, so is it by an inevitable consequence, easily assailable by specious error.

There are in the present day, many works,

avowedly engaged in disseminating opinions, which are fatal to purity of motive, and holiness of life; which are inimical to the interests of religion; which contravene the influence of its truths; and which though they may not entirely *pervert* the heart, yet obtain such a hold upon the mind, as to enfeeble its action, and paralyse its exertions: and these may be so disguised, especially under the mask of candour, and philosophical inquiry, as to be both specious and dangerous. But besides avowed infidelity, there are other books, written particularly within the last few years, for the purpose of disseminating *practical Socinianism;* and these from their pleasing style, and from the support they derive, from the ostentatious *character and conduct* of its professed disciples generally, are calculated to fascinate the young, to captivate those with whom manner is almost omnipotent, and to make a deep impression upon the unwary. Hence they are greatly to be dreaded, since Socinianism, with all its rationality, must be considered, both synthetically and analytically as positively *anti-christian*, inasmuch as it blots out the glory of Christ as the Saviour of sinners, and substitutes the narrow motives of expediency and influence, for the pure desire of being made like unto the Son of God, by the agency of the Holy Spirit.

In committing therefore into the hands of her child, any work which has a relation to religion, or morality, or the conduct of the life, the mo-

ther will be anxious, that the former may be the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus Christ, the religion of the Bible, the religion of the primitive Christians, the religion of our evangelical Church, and of that immense body of holy men, who agree with her, in all her important doctrinal views, though they may differ in some unimportant particulars, and though they may give too great a preponderance to their peculiar views of church government: and she will also take care that the morality inculcated, shall be founded only on the broad basis of truth, which this religion affords.

But beside these, there are other books of high character, and importance to general knowledge, or to the interests of literature; works, to which in the department of history particularly, and of natural philosophy, there may perhaps be *scarcely any*, if *any parallel*, yet so interlarded with error, so intermixed with irreligion, that the young mind, ere it can be aware of danger, may have drank deeply of a poison, which will pervade the principles, and influence the conduct, and alienate the affections, from the simplicity of piety; while it will constantly oppose itself to the progress of the light of divine truth. All other works may be made the means of diffusing error; and are therefore objects of jealous and wakeful attention. With regard to those, to which particular allusion has been made, they should not be entrusted to the hands of one

whose principles are not thoroughly established; and even then, the slightest wound inflicted by the envenomed arrow of the sceptic, will often prove dangerous, and the more fatal, because it operates unseen, and lulls the nervous system to the slumber of death!

From these dangers, the young should be carefully guarded, and that even although it may in consequence be necessary to have recourse to an author, whose language is less pure, less beautiful, less attractive, whose abilities are inferior, and whose opportunities of knowledge may have been less abundant. It will not be sufficient to commit these works into the hands of children, and to *trust* to the influence of the good principles they may have been taught; or to rest in the power possessed by the parent, of opposing and correcting the morbid infusion which may have been received; there cannot be two more fatal errors, than trusting to the *security* of *untried principle*, the very situation of greatest danger; or of resting in the opportunity of correcting a wrong bias, a consequence which it is not in the power of man to ensure. It is indeed allowed, that truth may be circulated; and that left to its own nature, power, and influence, it will supplant error; but in this case, *truth and error* do not meet on equal terms; since in the support of the latter, there is the depravity of human nature to contend with, and this adds greatly to the fatal prerogative of *error;* for although these

opposing principles, may be enforced with equal ability and sincerity; yet the *latter* will possess a greater number of affinities with the human heart, will seize on its strong holds, will make sure of its influence, will run its course, and pervade the mind, and prejudice the conduct, long before it can be overtaken by the *former;* and therefore, the mother will most carefully preserve her offspring from this polluted source. It will not be sufficient that this vigilance may be exerted towards a Hume, or a Gibbon, a Rees, or a Morgan; the literature of our French and German neighbours, is above all, to be most carefully watched, and most rigidly tested. How often has it happened, that the mind has been ruined from this source, which had been most carefully preserved from the evils of "home and of kindred." This too frequently arises from thoughtlessness; and sometimes perhaps, from the inability of parents to consult the foreign original. But let them never put into the hands of their children, a foreign book which they have not previously read; it is there, the serpent lurks unseen, among the sweetest flowers, and inflicts it deadliest sting; it is there, that the magic of talent, lulls suspicion and disarms vigilance, and the charmed victim is unable to escape, and remains fascinated, till its best hopes have been withered, and its fairest prospects have been clouded, and its firmest principles have been shaken, and its integrity has been lost, and its

peace of mind has been exchanged for sorrow of heart. It is by no means intended to include *all* under this *ban;* indeed good education is *impossible without* foreign literature, which in many instances, contains the very best treatises; but it is a path which requires the utmost care, and is beset with the highest danger.

CHAP. XXIV.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

IV. Novels.

Although this head of inquiry has been in part anticipated, when treating of imagination; yet a few additional remarks are necessary for the completion of the present design. It is to be recollected, that the generic characters of these productions are those of being unreal creations; a light and fascinating species of reading, dressed in an airy and fantastic garb; treating for the most part of the great, and uniformly interesting passion of love; their heroes and heroines are made so amiable, that the mind is irresistibly led to sympathize with them, and to participate more or less the feelings by which they are actuated; as well as insensibly to imbibe their spirit, and admire their actions; a spirit which is grievously defective in itself, and actions which are supposed to arise from very improper motives. Yet these works of error, are so pleasing as to be eagerly desired; and they are so injurious both to the moral and intellectual vigour, that their use should be most cautiously and sparingly permitted.

Novels have destroyed their thousands and ten thousands; at this pernicious source are awakened passions which agitate the bosom, and hurry us along at their bidding, since we readily follow those in whom we feel an interest; we imitate their vices before we are aware of it; and purity of principle is sacrificed at the shrine of refinement, false taste, and fashionable morality. The alluring garb in which these productions are attired; the trickery of scene and of circumstance; the interest of situation; the subjects treated of; the commanding qualities of their favourites; aye, and even their defective morality, all form so many points of attraction to the young; a confession which shews at once the real tendency of this species of composition. It is indeed true, that the last few years have developed a better taste than has formerly existed on the subject of these productions; and that there are many whose graphic description of manners, whose scenic truth, and whose historical details have greatly removed them from the condemnation of the preceding paragraph; but in the very best, even in the *comparatively harmless* works of Richardson, and West, and Edgeworth, and Brunton, and Scott, there is much which parents should not wish their children to *hear*, and why then to *see?* How much more, then, in the writings of Fielding and Smollet; but above all, in the general stock of miserable trash in which vice is masked, and which have not, like the former, the redeeming good qualities of being true to nature, though in

her worst forms. It is not contended that novels are to be altogether excluded from education; on the contrary, a knowledge of our literature requires an acquaintance with the *best;* but the selection should be very rigid; they should not be placed in the hands of the young and unformed; and when perused by the elder pupils, it should always be under the immediate attention of the mother.

After all, how much more important will it be for the parent to select for her child such works as may be suited to its prevailing character, temper, and disposition; to any particular object she may have in view, or for the purpose of conveying the deepest practical lessons of wisdom. Reading is an engine of amazing power; and there is not one desire of her heart, not one wish prompted by fond affection for her offspring, which may not be realized by means of the books chosen for their study or amusement. And when this choice has been made, her duty is but half accomplished, unless she narrowly watch, with earnest solicitude, the influence of her plans; unless she take care of their operation; unless she guard the tender mind from any improper bias; and unless she lead it to form a right, and correct, and principled judgment—*guided by reason, and governed by religion.*

V. Poetry.

If the whole class of novels require the greatest caution in being entrusted to the young and undisciplined mind, *à fortiori,* must that caution be

increased, when the parent's vigilance is directed to the same species of composition, empowered with all the aid of poetic diction, and poetic license. If it be unwise to stimulate the imagination with the unreal creations of the novelist, *à fortiori*, is it folly to increase that stimulation by all the pomp and circumstance of verse; and to impress it upon the memory, by the facility afforded to recollection, through its peculiar structure. If it be one of the evils of novel-reading to arouse the passions, *à fortiori*, is this evil rendered more certain, more fatally, more extensively operative, when couched under the attractive guise of poetry!! The young, the imaginative, the susceptible, the feeling, the accomplished, and especially the female mind, will dwell for days together over a new poem; will be enraptured with its song; will be fascinated by its sentiment; will be enchanted by its imagery; and in proportion to the fervour of its feelings, so will be the diminished influence of its reason; and thus will it be prepared for any sinister agency which the author may choose to communicate; and a poet's authority has not *always* been exerted on the side of religion and virtue. True, indeed, there are some christian poets; but in the very best of our standard and most classical authors, there will be found much to reprehend, much that had better never meet the eye of the young; for the only way in which we can expect virtuous action, is by the inculcation of good principle, and by preserving the heart free from vicious passion. All

therefore which has been said on the subject of novels in general, is more than applicable to novels in verse.

It is nevertheless true, that poetry has its beneficial influence in enlarging the mind, refining the fancy, adjusting the sensibilities, and storing the intellect with pure diction and fruitful images; it is useful in engaging the attention, quickening the percipient faculty, stimulating imitation, improving the taste, and laying the foundation of just principles of criticism, and of a discrimination of the sublime and beautiful: but what are these advantages, compared with the demoralization of the heart, and the pollution of the fancy, and the enthusiasm of emotion, and the admiration of those who are driven to the commission of iniquity by headstrong passion, uncontrouled by reflection, unregulated by morals, unsubdued by religion. The parent then will exercise her duty of censor most rigidly, and unsparingly; and while she seeks to obtain these secondary goods, she will not do so at the expense of primary evil; she will not prefer a lively imagination to a sound judgment; she will not elevate literary taste above enlightened conscience; she will not give the palm to feeling rather than to discretion.

In fulfilling this indication, she will only have to make a very cautious choice, and to read with her children; she is not to throw aside indiscriminately every volume of poetry, *because it is poetry;* nor is she to select *every poem* which has

been written by *an author* professedly christian; she will find some of the finest specimens of poetical imagery in the sacred Scriptures; among the writers of our own country she will notice a Milton, a Spenser, a Campbell, a Cowper, a Southey, a Scott, and others: perhaps even she may tolerate the puling imbecility of the second babyhood of poetry, for the sake of its *harmlessness;* if *even childishness* can be *harmless* in grown persons: but she will pause, she will more than pause, when she approaches the pages of Him whose splendid talents were cradled in satire; whose early maturity was marked by the gloomy pilgrimage of the misanthropic "Childe," which sought for peace, but found it not; whose alarming influence was long exerted for the fiend-like purpose of weakening the tone of virtuous feeling, and demoralizing the purity of the female mind; and the early evening of whose life was closed in the doubts of scepticism, surrounded by the putrid, and putrifying and polluting exhalations arising from the marshes of "*liberal*" licentiousness, and breathing, aye more, luxuriating in the malaria of the most finished profligacy: these having been embodied in the character of one, whom to name is to disgrace the literature of our country, and whose adventures to have read, no modest female can acknowledge without feeling that she is degraded.

Pity is it indeed, that the pages of *our great bard,* should be *so* deformed by faults, which were in a principal measure the consequence of the

age in which he wrote, as to render them unfit for indiscriminate perusal by the young: unfortunately too, these blemishes are so intimately connected with beauties, and with that exquisite knowledge of man, which constitutes their great value, as that the former cannot be removed without destroying the latter. Reading these works therefore must be left to the adult, rather than the adolescent age. An exception may perhaps be made in favour of some of his tragedies, of which composition however, the finest specimens are to be found in the pages of *Racine*.

One other remark only: the greatest danger is not always to be dreaded from the avowedly profligate; those authors which weaken the tone of the reason, and introduce a certain languor of feeling, an undefined state of luxurious listlessness, and foster a degree of morbid sensibility, and develop a sickly taste, are the most injurious; since they insidiously prepare the mind, that it may become the soil for vice: open licentiousness is disgusting, and produces a recoil; while by the more covert method of undermining principle, the mischief is effected before the sufferer or the parent is aware; on the whole, the greatest caution, and a sound judgment, and vigilant discretion are necessary to render this pursuit innocent and useful.

VI. Periodical Literature.

The press is so inundated with periodical publications of every shape and quality, that it is necessary to say a few words on the subject. We

might at once refer this species of composition to the general principles mentioned in treating of abstracts and abridgements. There are indeed some excellent periodicals; but in general, this is a source of instruction which we do not admire for the young. For, independently of the base character of some, and of the false opinions which are circulated by others, and the partial and unjust views which are given of authors, according to the prejudices of the writer, or of the defective notions of morality and religion which are assumed by many; independently of all these, and of many other errors and obliquities, one grand objection is, that a review-reader will never make a good and substantial character; he becomes contented with a smattering of knowledge; he reads rather for the daily necessities of conversation than for real information; he rests satisfied with the opinions of others, and is contented to form his own conclusions from the judgment of prejudiced, and often hireling writers, rather than his own; and thus indolence is fostered, and bad taste is produced, and the supply of knowledge is cut off; and the character is impaired; its strength and solidity are destroyed; irritability takes the place of energy; and a shew of acquaintance with books occupies the room of genuine information.

There is, however, one portion of our periodical literature which requires a higher degree of animadversion, viz. *Newspapers*. Setting aside the

erroneous political views which these are too frequently found to inculcate, the party feeling by which they are characterized, and their general hatred of real and practical Christianity, and evangelical piety, notwithstanding their frequent unhallowed warfare in defence of its secularities; it is particularly against their moral influence that we would lift a warning voce. Let parents beware, how they permit access for their children, to this source of moral pollution by which they can only be familiarized to crime; the aspect of vice will become less abhorrent; they will be initiated into details with which they should never have been acquainted; the mind will be brought to rest on circumstances of depravity which at first may excite a blush from the conscious loss of innocence; but which finding in the human bosom a latent spark of evil, will soon kindle unholy passions, which will not only be tolerated, but cherished into vigour, and luxuriated over in action. There must inevitably be a loss of mental purity; and what wise man would risk this loss for his children, with a conviction of the misery to which it must lead, and without a single countervailing advantage; for no knowledge is to be found in newspapers which may not be better obtained from some other purer source. Enough can scarcely be said on this sad subject; for the practice stigmatized is unfortunately one of every day occurrence; and we have known children record the annals of theft, and murder, and pugi-

lism, and adultery, and many other crimes which are an offence even to be named, who were very deficient in their stores of common information.

VII. Conclusion.

The choice of books affords an opportunity for conveying *religious instruction*, for guiding the heart, regulating the affections, and directing them supremely to that Being, who is infinitely worthy of our love, and who demands the whole heart. The accomplishment of this design of leading the child to the fountain of peace and truth, and of teaching it to accompany its streams in their minute subdivisions, will form a prominent object with the Christian parent, when she is directing the literary application of its intellectual resources. Let it be observed, that just opinions and rectitude of conduct are to be explained, not as simple acts, but as principles, valuable only in proportion as they are employed, and as they assist us in the dangers and perplexities of life; and that the observance of these motives of action is good, only as *they* are characterized by the spirit and temper under the influence of which they are rendered prominent. The operation of principle is *universal;* for Christianity is not only to guide us to happiness, and to influence our conduct on great and particular occasions, but in the hour of sorrow, and distress, and desertion; and in every circumstance, and at every moment of existence. Hence the great importance that

the choice of books should be such as will essentially tend to promote its grand design; hence the extent and purity of the commands of the gospel, together with the richness of its promises; hence the necessity for explaining and exemplifying the grounds for the happiness of its disciples, as well as for noticing the agency of that invisible hand, (which if we forget, we grow careless,) which regulates all the lesser events of life, and for preserving the heart free from the destructive influence of lukewarmness, a state which very quickly terminates in insensibility to those greater occasions on which the vigour of the Christian should be called into action.

What then are, shortly, the principles which a feeble, erring, but sincere being, in quest of truth, is anxious to produce or to obtain? Are they not that the love of God, should influence us cheerfully to give up every thing which is incompatible with obedience to his will, and to do *all* that would be pleasing to Him? Are they not, that religion should characterize every action, subdue every temper, regulate every pursuit, govern every effort, and change and purify every corrupt disposition? Are they not, that there must be a perpetual warfare against sin, and that in this warfare consists the practice of piety? Are they not, that this struggle must be exhibited every day, on our tempers, and habits, and dispositions—circumstances which are most obvious and open to the observation of others, and the prevailing

character of which will be assumed, and *justly assumed too*, as congenial with the principles upon which our conduct is founded? Are they not, that the greatest vigilance is required in the common intercourse of life, and that the greatest danger is to be apprehended from not considering this world as a field for the exercise of christian virtue, in which our hearts must be guarded, in which our tempers will be tried and our dispositions and affections will be assailed in a thousand ways; but rather as a situation in which the scrutiny of self may be laid aside, activity may be lulled into quiescence, and vigilance may be disarmed? Are they not such, that their transient forgetfulness is the cause why so little of the Christian is seen, in the daily spirit, and temper, and conduct of the man; why he is so easily assailed by temptation, and falls under its influence; why dulness and torpor seize and obscure his character; why it shines with a pale lustre; why its variety and beauty are obscured, and its glimmering light, instead of being active, burning and shining, demonstrating the true nature of Christianity and the way to heaven, is seen only through a dense, and an unequal medium, in which its rays are so split and divided, and refracted, as no longer to converge to their proper focus; and to afford only in consequence an obscure radiance which is more likely to deceive than to guide the traveller? May not a similar reason be alleged as the cause why so much darkness and uncertainty frequently

hang over the character, becloud the views, and in some measure alter their very nature, by their being compelled to pass through this dense medium of besotted materiality, to the heart? Is it not necessary to lay aside every weight, and to run with patience, the course set before us in the gospel? Is it not incumbent upon us, to acknowledge our helplessness, and to seek the aid of the Holy Spirit of grace? Is it not of importance, that we should exert a vigilant attention to the practical influence of holiness, in all the lesser circumstances of life, as well as on all its greater occasions, since this tends to produce that vigour of divine grace in the soul, and to lessen that feebleness of human nature, on which the power of resisting sin on the one hand, as well as the influence of temptation on the other manifestly depend? Is it not necessary to recollect that there is *no trifling occasion* for action, but that *every* such season affords an opportunity for displaying the agency of Christianity; and *that* cannot be trifling, or of small moment, which *religion* ought to characterize; since that cannot be secondary, whose attributes are of primary consideration? Are we not bound to recollect that the *perception* of conscience is kept tenderly alive by listening to its minutest admonitions; and that *thus*, we shall the more certainly be led to reject what is wrong, and to seize on what is right, and hold it fast, before we have had time for a detailed examination of the

reasons why we do so? Are we not instructed by observation, by the aid of reason, and by the light of revelation, that the lesser duties of life, are in fact, the connecting links in the great scheme of human action; and that if this bond of union be severed, the unity and congruity of the character are destroyed, as well as that the practical, and universal application of religious principle, is endangered? Are we not hourly taught, if we will but learn, that the minuter occasions for practising the commands of religion, become important from their number *when improved*, and fatally accumulate the tale of talents misapplied and perverted, where they may have been neglected? Do we not then infer from these considerations, the necessity for great circumspection, the extreme importance which must be given to divine truth, and the circumstances which will furnish a guide, to the religious reading of the young; which should always be of such a description, as to inculcate the conclusion, that *piety* does not consist in any *assent to certain doctrines, but in their influence on the heart, and through it upon the life, displayed in all the lesser shades of action, and passion, and feeling, and sentiment*—of hatred to vice, and of the love and practice of virtue, when we lie down, and when we rise up, abroad and at home, when we walk by the way, and when we are excluded from every eye but that of omnipotence?

To conclude, it is not only necessary that

these circumstances should influence the parent in her choice of books; but it is also required of her, to combine with this method of teaching, close observation on the *conduct* of her offspring, as well as diligent inquiry into their opening intelligence, in order that she may ascertain the nature of the impressions *they* may have received; their progress in religious knowledge, the amount of all they have retained, and its immediate and prospective influence upon their character and conduct. This principle is also applicable to *every* species of knowledge, which may be acquired from books; though its favourite subject be that of religious instruction, because *it*, above every other kind of information, too frequently falls unheeded, upon the uninterested eye—too frequently floats on the surface of character, and is rapidly borne by the unimpressed tide of events, to the ocean of forgetfulness. Children too often read, especially on subjects demanding seriousness and attention, without applying their little volatile hearts to the tendency of what they read, and without even retaining the ideas; they chase the sentiment from page to page; they are pleased with detecting the origin and influence of opinion; they may follow a train of consecutive reasoning, and closely sustained argument, and though they may be delighted with the *form* of the ratiocination, they will not know a syllable which they have perused. The habit of inquiry, on the part of the parent obliges them to attend,

and to form that kind of digest of their acquisitions, which impresses them upon their memory, and which will be useful in after life, from the power and the habit of regular thinking, which it induces. But this scrutiny must extend far beyond a mere effort of the understanding; it must proceed to the *nature* of the impressions which may have been received; for the uninformed mind may *possibly*, and even *probably* have obtained oblique or distorted views of a given subject, especially of one which is confessedly too great for finite reason to grasp; and the influence of error is always prejudicial, at a nearer or a more remote period; since where clear and adequate ideas may not have been formed, mistakes and misconceptions, will too often have arisen; and therefore, the mother's anxious inquiry will be directed to ascertain, whether the impressions received have been coincident with the impressing cause. And lastly, there is one step further; the parent will search into the *practical influence* of each impression, upon the particular character of the individual child; and according to this influence, will encourage, or modify, or give it its proper tendency; thus ascertaining the nature, the extent, and the probable influence of the knowledge obtained from reading. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things

are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians iv. 8, 9.

CHAP. XXV.

ON AMUSEMENTS.

The mind, but especially, the youthful mind, stands in need of amusement. If it be not provided with relaxation, it acquires insensibly, a tone of severity, and austere reserve, which renders its intercourse with society less pleasing, as well as less instructive; while by being kept constantly stretched in one direction it loses power and elasticity; it receives a peculiar set form, and is no longer capable of extending its inquiries wherever intellect may roam, and religion guide. The tone and tension of health require for their preservation, alternate contraction and relaxation, and are disturbed by the violent efforts of excessive action, as well as by the perfect stillness of indolence.

Amusement should *relax;* but it should not be such, either in its nature, or its degree, as to dissipate; it should recreate, not unhinge; in the one case it will refresh, while in the other it must debilitate. Recreation again, is not idleness, than which, nothing can be more tedious and insipid, or more destructive to activity and energy of mind. There is nothing to which it is

naturally more repugnant, or which exerts a more fatal influence on its faculties, than to have nothing to do; for although the love of ease, may be predominant in the human bosom; yet it is averse from a state of indolence, because inaction is not only *not ease:* it is positively *painful,* to avoid which, as well as the curse of self-reproach, it *will be* occupied, and apparently interested by the pursuit of the merest trifles; for, *engaged it must be,* or at the least, it must seem to be so. Exertion is necessary to its peace; and this tendency will form a prominent indication for regulating the amusements of childhood. Thus, long intervals of listless inactivity, are not to be permitted; much less are they to be held up as a bonus for present activity and exertion; this would be to encourage idleness, and to give it such a hold upon the mind, as that it will never again readily quit; it would be sustaining indolence as the *reward of activity,* an inconsequence, which cannot but be prejudicial; and it would be teaching the child to esteem that as a *great good,* which it ought to dread and deprecate as a paramount *evil.* A period of idleness, is one of security, of danger, and of liability to the influence of temptation; it is one in which evil dispositions and affections are likely to be called into action; it is an interval of employment, a pause of animation, which suspends mental industry, enervates intellectual power, and renders future instruction, a task much more difficult and arduous. The mind

must be *unbent* but not enfeebled; it must in its moments of completest relaxation, preserve such a degree of tonicity, as shall enable it whenever called upon, to resume instantaneously all its plans, to call about it all its energies, and to put forth all the vigour of its strength. A spirit of idleness once produced, is not easily removed; it is the deadly nightshade of the soul; its poison lurks concealed under a beautiful berry; and the unsuspicious and unwary, greedily swallow the destructive fruit; the calm of the narcotic steals upon them, and while they suffer from its influence, they flatter themselves all is well, and are unsuspectingly amusing themselves with gaudy trifles, on the very verge of destruction, surrounded by dangers imperceptible to their palsied eye, and increasing in intensity, exactly in direct proportion to the fatal security of the victim. It *may* sometimes happen, that *instruction* may be blended with *amusement;* the former however must be of a light kind; neither will its impression be durable; but it may be useful from being obvious, and from the frequency of its recurrence.

After all, the power of amusement to convey instruction is not of an extensive nature: there can be no such thing as amusing the mind into knowledge, the acquisition of which requires labour, earnestness, and diligence. However the natural difficulties of the way may be smoothed by a judicious instructor, still it will always remain a steep ascent, and will ever demand effort.

This exertion will not be made by the young mind under the idea of amusement; for so soon as the pursuit of knowledge necessitates labour, it ceases to amuse; hence its sphere of active good will be circumscribed, and its utility will be trifling.

But amusement *may do harm;* and although under any circumstances it may not be productive of lasting benefit, yet it is above all desirable that its object should be that which is pure, and which will engage the mind *actively*, though it do not interest it excessively: it should be such as to employ the intellectual powers, to demonstrate the evils arising from want of occupation, and to prevent those which are the consequence of the unemployed *vis inertiæ*. One grand object of amusement should be to promote the health, and the development of the animal powers, particularly of the muscular system, and of the organs of sense.

The grand basis of amusement having been pointed out, no harm can result from entering into the several games which are suited to the different ages of infancy, and adolescence; provided always that these be *innocent* in their immediate consequences, in their remote associations, in their obvious tendency, and in their ultimate results. This principle may be safely admitted, and suffered to take its course, only that its operation must be watched; that which is harmless in itself, must be guarded from excess; and that which is unobjectionable in its season and in

its place, must be saved from improper application. It does not do, however, to becloud the hour of amusement with an atmosphere of restraint; the cheerfulness and vivacity of youth must be indulged; within due bounds it must be permitted its native sportiveness; the sedateness of maturity is not desirable in the young; only the buoyancy of their spirits must be repressed when it becomes boisterous, and the violence of their mirth must be preserved within the limits of decorum. If the natural hilarity and gaiety of this spring-tide of life, the time of the "singing of birds" be morosely checked, such a mistake will terminate in the production of a character unamiably reserved; or of one which, from a proud feeling of dependence and restraint, runs into the opposite extreme, and delights to revel in every untried scene of riot and dissipation.

The desire for amusement cannot be wholly extinguished, neither is it desirable, if it were possible, but only that it should be kept within just bounds; that it should not be permitted to engross too much time or attention; that it do not distract the mind and unfit it for study; that it be not offensive to the will of God, or opposed to his commands, or injurious in its influence, directly or indirectly, to the moral character.

There is also considerable danger of not observing a proper balance between business and recreation; the mind stands in need of both these states, and much of its energy will depend upon their nice and accurate adjustment to its power;

on the principle before pointed out of the varied periods of repose and activity for every organ of the body. Too much amusement, especially that which is prolonged, and above all, that which amounts simply to the indolent consumption of time, must be studiously avoided, lest the mind should fall into a state in which it does not earnestly apply itself to any one employment; but remains listless in circumstances which demand activity, while it is energetic over trifles, at the bidding of the merest caprice. Whatever is done should be habitually done with earnestness; in every pursuit, exertion should be employed; work hard and play hard; always recollecting that quiescence, the stillness of inactivity is destructive to the mental welfare, and approaches very nearly to the winter of the faculties, the torpor of an hybernating animal, the unprotected state of sleep, or the complete cessation of life.

And finally, amusements should not partake of the spirit by which the world is actuated. There are many little sources of recreation perfectly innocent, which all may enjoy in common; but there are others which subvert some law of God, or which impair the vigour and activity of our love to man; and which can only be tolerated by forgetting our Bibles, and laying aside our religion, and assuming for our rule the principles, the spirit, and the maxims of a world which lieth in wickedness. Though perhaps not strictly criminal, yet the agency of these will be baneful, if they lead the young mind to admit the principles, and think

better of the disposition in which they originated. Not that we would encourage a spirit of separation, which would look like a supercilious exclamation of " stand by, for I am holier than thou;" of such it has been said that they " are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day;" but we would never lose sight of the christian principle, " be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may know what is good and acceptable in the sight of God."

This disconformity to the world, must be observed in all those amusements which may excite evil passions or affections; or which may give occasion for their exercise in any obvious degree; or which may lead the young into the way of temptation; and this rule will assuredly exclude the *ball-room*, and *the theatre, the turf* and *the ring;* particularly will it place its *uncompromising veto* upon any occupation which will lead directly or indirectly to a spirit of gambling, that coldest selfishness, in whose atmosphere, not even the virtues possessed of the lowest degree of vitality can long exist; and the indulgence of which will assuredly prove fatal to the character, no matter how trifling the stake! A piece of paper, if it can be an object of desire, is enough to develop the feeling; and future occasions will give it importance; and by and by, it will stand confessed in all its length and breadth, and depth, and magnitude of desolation; in all the lowest turpitude of unpalliated crime. These are objects of terror to the mother,

and the subject of her unceasing anxiety; the germ of evil will demand her solicitude in early infancy, and when the child is further advanced in life, and the development of its powers is characterized by reason, and its social attributes; *her* unremitting care and watchfulness over its amusements will still be necessary; and the application of the same principle will be required, with this difference only, that a thirst for knowledge early fostered will *now* frequently constitute *its pursuit* an amusement, and will thus often supersede the attractions of the world; while this principle, cultivated into passion, may be applied to the thirst after true knowledge, the wisdom that is from above. The researches of science, in any of its subordinate branches, especially in those included under the general term of Experimental Philosophy, will frequently take the place of more questionable engagements, and will preserve the mind indifferent towards the influence of those gay and fashionable compliances, against which it requires to be continually guarded.

CHAP. XXVI.

ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS may be sought after with propriety, so long as they may be considered the *perfection* of some one or more of the faculties or attributes with which nature has endowed us; so long as their immediate tendency be pure, and provided that they do not open a wide field to the influence of temptation, or give rise to such an amount of evil as cannot be counterbalanced by the good they may be supposed to produce; and provided also, that they do not occupy the place of more important pursuits, and abstract the attention from objects which demand primary consideration. That accomplishments should promote the designs of the Creator, and the happiness and the good of his creatures; that they should be moral in their influence, free from danger in their pursuit, innocent in their consequences upon the understanding, the affections, and the conduct; that they do not occupy too much time, and pre-engage the attention; these are the tests by which they must be tried, and if they will not bear the scrutiny, better would it be

in this instance, that the mind be blessed with ignorance, than cursed with the knowledge, and love, and admiration of sin.

The relative value of accomplishments should always be kept in view; and they should be sought after in subordination to objects which have a higher claim to notice, and which convey substantial knowledge. There are, however, many seasons in the period of youth, when, *with these limitations*, ornamental acquisitions will prove a useful pursuit; and when their influence may be salutary in refining the taste, softening the manner, and embellishing life. To a certain extent, the acquaintance with different languages may be deemed an accomplishment; but it is not one of those occupations that are included in the general meaning of a term that is applied to all those attainments which are *ornamental* without possessing a proportionate amount of intrinsic worth, or even affording an *adequate and compensating good* for all the labour bestowed upon them; and these are *dancing*, *drawing*, and *music*.

We shall not include in the general enumeration, because we consider them unworthy a distinct notice, those lesser arts of *bijouterie*, which so strongly mark the taste of female education of the present day. We rejoice that we have escaped from that epoch in which the height of ambition for female instruction, was to make its subjects accomplished cooks, and sempstresses, and to initiate them into the art and mystery of confectionary and embroidery: but we know not

that we have gained much by the exchange, if these pursuits have been replaced by the confection of the thousand *knick-knack follies* of the present fashion. It is degrading that the rational and immaterial soul should be chained down daily for hours to the limits of a rice-basket, a paper vase, a card rack, or some equally frivolous ornament, without one *redeeming good property about it.* We pretend not to say that the knowledge of these little arts may not be very well in their place; but the portion of time they should be permitted to occupy, should be very small indeed. Let the employment be tested by principle, and see if it possess any but a negative good, viz. that it be not positively injurious; and then say, if it be more harmless, or so useful as the days of good housewifery, from which we congratulate ourselves on our escape. We are aware it will be said, these little matters are now frequently disposed of in aid of some charitable design: we think not the better of them; the *end* will not sanctify the means; neither is *that christian charity* which neglects the cultivation of the talents entrusted to our care; which mispends time; which is deaf to the voice of the poor, and the sick, and the ignorant, and the miserable, and the destitute, and the irreligious *at home;* while it is absorbed by the trifling, unimpressive, useless pursuit of a manufacture, whose proceeds may be for the purpose of aiding the good work of charity *abroad.* Neither shall we notice the *bas bleu* propensity, since we are

persuaded *this evil, if it be an evil,* will cure itself, and that it never can become general; because the labour of mind, and the reach of intellect, and the perseverance which it requires, are such as will not be commonly met with, and as will not be often lavished upon the pursuit of learning as a mere accomplishment, for the exclusive purpose of dictation and display.

Dancing has been already noticed in the chapter on Exercise, (see vol. i. part. i. chap. 10.) and we shall only here recur to it, for the purpose of again cautioning christian parents on the tendency of this accomplishment. Can it be said of dancing that it is the *perfection* of any of the faculties of the body or mind? Can it be said that its immediate tendency is pure? that it does not lead the young into the snare of temptation? or that it does not give rise to a variety of evil passions, without any *adequate good*—nay more, without *any good* which may not be as well obtained without it? or can it be said, that it *does not* occupy the place of more important pursuits; employ time which might be better engaged; distract the attention, and engross the thoughts; and that too, when the longest life is only long enough to bring us acquainted with our ignorance, and not half long enough for the great objects of pursuit which are before us? Can it be said that *the end of dancing* is for the glory of God, and the good of his creatures: or that either the one or the other of these purposes is *promoted* by the midnight revel, and the fiend-like passions which it broods over with

its sable, but illuminated wing, and brings to new born life? Can it be said that the application of this accomplishment is moral in its nature and influence; that it is free from danger, or innocent in its consequences? Or finally, can it be said that it does not occupy too much time and attention; that it does not agitate the bosom with the flutter of expectation, and the tumultuous heaving of passion; that it admits of a pleasing retrospect; and that it does not incapacitate the mind for the great work which is before it? And if all these be necessarily answered in the negative, where is the christian parent, who in sincerity of purpose can doom her child to a risk so fearful, for a mere ideal vanity?

With regard to *drawing*, perhaps it is the most innocent, and the least dangerous accomplishment, so that there can be little hesitation about its permission. Painting does not *necessarily* expose its possessor to any peculiar danger; it is at all times an agreeable recreation; and it forms a resource against many a solitary hour, which, when the mind is distracted with anxiety, would have been otherwise spent in a wearisome, and unceasing review of its cares; or when it is so occupied and fatigued, or so weakened by exertion, or enfeebled by disease, as to be incapable of pursuing its customary duties with the same degree of pleasure. *Thus*, it is a source of satisfaction and enjoyment, which will soothe the mind, engage the attention, and tranquillize the heart. Let it however be always recollected,

that even this accomplishment must not be permitted to engross the thoughts, or occupy the time; at least, that it must not make hostile inroads upon hours which should be devoted to the real labours of life, to the pursuit of knowledge, or the practice of virtue; and that the taste for paintings, which it develops, should be *purely* cultivated; and that it be not so employed as to excite and stimulate passions, and emotions and feelings, which the wise and the good will ever be at pains to subdue. Landscape, and particularly flower-painting, from its *connexion* with the garden, and the country, and from fixing the attention upon this small, but beautiful portion of the fringe of nature's drapery, may be rendered useful in developing a taste for natural knowledge, and natural history; for all that lives and breathes, and grows and thrives, and shews forth the wonders of his creating power, the depths of his wisdom, and the glories of his grace, who is the Author and Giver of life.

But the question of *music* admits of a far greater variety of opinion. Upon *most minds* its influence is considerable; and in its application to sacred subjects, its power of kindling devotional feelings is certainly *extensive,* but it is of a questionable nature: its agency is exerted principally on the passions, and the heart remains untouched, and the conscience unaffected, and the judgment unconvinced; and the individual, with all his emotions, is but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal, and depends for all his fervor upon

the little accident of atmospherical vibration. It is confessed that the general influence of music on the passions, and affections, is unquestionably great; but it may be equally exerted *before* as *after*, that the mind has been imbued with a spirit of Christianity; *before* the passions have been subdued by the mild sway of religion, or the affections regulated by the holy law of God: and will the influence of music *then* be useful or injurious? If then its agency in awakening the fervour of devotional *feeling*, rather than the steady light of christian duty be considerable; and its more *general* influence be, to stimulate ungoverned desires, and wayward fancies, surely it will require caution in its application, and great reserve in the choice of its compositions.

Again, it is a fascinating accomplishment, and may engage more time and attention than is proper. And since, in order to become a proficient, it is necessary to devote many hours each day to its practical pursuit; as many probably, as may be given to all the other occupations of DUTY; the *subordination to more important acquisitions*, so necessary to the innocence of this, is entirely lost, and it becomes the almost exclusive object of desire. In order then to preserve *from evil*, the influence of this accomplishment, it must not be suffered to infringe on other duties; and that it may remain innocent, this principle must be clearly laid down, and systematically enforced.

Music again, may lead the mind, to the perusal and love of a species of composition, whose moral tendency is more than questionable, nay, decidedly injurious; since it preoccupies the mind with unworthy ideas, and excludes those which are valuable, if it do not even *worse*, and pander to vice, and stimulate the passions, and the animal propensities with which these stand connected. This indeed, is not so much the fault of the music as of the *words*, by which it is accompanied; exclude these, and the notes may again become harmless, except in so far as they are associated in the mind with equivocal recollections.

And lastly, while music *may* amuse, and soothe, and interest, it will also prove a snare through life; it may become a dangerous possession; it may fascinate the mind, and absorb the attention; it may attract the heart, and concentrate the affections, and in all these cases, it may prove most injurious. These evils, however, it must be confessed, arise rather from want of proper management in its instruction; for if it be moderately followed, and preserved in its subordinate situation; if it be not suffered to occupy too much time, or to interfere with more important duties; and if a rigid selection of pieces, be carefully made; then may it sometimes soothe the troubled spirit, and become a pleasing possession; cheer the mind without stimulating or exhausting; and diffuse over the

heart, a genial glow, which may animate it in the pursuit of virtue, rather than retard its progress.

And after all that can be said, the greatest accomplishment for the female mind, is *practical charity;* the art of doing good to others personally; searching out for the sick and the destitute; instructing the ignorant; healing the sick, clothing the naked, reclaiming the wandering, and leading them to the fountain of blessedness, the source of divine truth!

THE END.

LONDON:
IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

A TRIBUTE OF SYMPATHY,

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Fourth Edition. 12mo. 5s. boards.